The Thesis Committee for Nathaniel Andrew Rossi
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

Fighting the Latino Threat Narrative:
Latina/o Voice and Representation in Post-Network Era Television

APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:

Supervisor:

Mary C. Beltran

Charles E. Berg

Fighting the Latino Threat Narrative:
Latina/o Voice and Representation in Post-Network Era Television

by

Nathaniel Andrew Rossi, B.A.

Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2017

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Gina, sisters, Kimberly and Sarah, and my late father, James.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee members, Mary Beltrán and Charles Ramírez Berg for offering their time and guidance throughout this research project. Their input and help has been invaluable to me. I would also like to thank Misa, Ben, Hannah, Ilse, Kiwi, Dylan and both Ryans for being an amazing cohort. I am so grateful that our friendship extended outside the classroom.

Abstract

Fighting the Latino Threat Narrative: Latina/o Voice and Representation in Post-Network Era Television

Nathaniel Andrew Rossi, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2017

Supervisor: Mary C. Beltrán

Imagery of the Latino Threat Narrative has seen a reemergence in U.S. popular news media since Donald Trump's political career became mainstream in 2016. His rhetoric brought new attention to a narrative that has existed since the dawn of U.S. visual culture in the early twentieth century and has marked Latinos as violent drug dealers and Latinas as incapable of controlling their fertility. This thesis explores how post-network era dramatic television series are complicating and countering the Latina/o threat in their narratives. My study focuses on two programs, Netflix's *Narcos* (2015-present) and The CW's *Jane the Virgin* (2014-present). I utilize textual, industrial and discourse analysis of these series to argue that post-network era forms of distribution, financing, and promotion have given Latina/o creators a greater stake or voice in the creation process. Despite inroads in diversity, as evidence by these two series, in the U.S. television industry, however, limitations remain due to the lack of Latina/os in the highest executive positions.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the dawn of U.S. moving image media culture in the early twentieth century, Latina/os have been characterized and portrayed as dangerous, overly promiscuous and unassimilated to Anglo American ways of life (Ramírez Berg 2003; Marez 2004). Over the past year, President Donald Trump's rhetoric describing Latinos as "criminals" and "rapists," actions of accusing a Mexican-American judge of being incapable of giving him a fair trial based on his ethnicity, and his general display of a lack of empathy towards immigrants has shed light on the themes and narratives that have historically been and are still at times popular in relation to representations of Latina/os in American film and television. He has invoked and worked to normalize what anthropologist Leo Chavez has called the "Latino Threat Narrative," or the threat of brown bodies to white hegemony in the United States, in terms of violence and a growing minority population with increased economic and political power.

This thesis specifically contemplates imagery of the Latino Threat Narrative in entertainment television. A recent comprehensive report on Latina/os in American visual media by researchers at Columbia University found that during the 2012-2013 television season 24.2% of Latina/o TV characters were linked to crime, a number that is up from just 6% in 1994 (Frances Negrón-Muntaner et al., 2014). Further, while the number of Latina leading actresses is rising, Latino leading men "have disappeared" (2). These statistics point to the conclusion that the stereotypical portrayals of Latina/os in U.S. television continue to be the norm and that the diversity of Latina/o stories being told is minimal and even growing worse. Latina/o media studies scholar Mary Beltrán (2016)

has also noted the "resurgence of Latino criminal roles in popular dramas, for example on *Breaking Bad* (2008-2013) and *Weeds* (Showtime, 2008-2012), which featured Latino characters as frightening thugs, drug dealers, and hit men" (30).

In this thesis, I build upon the concepts of phenomenal television and voice to investigate Latina/o representation on TV. I argue that in the post-network era, new models of production, distribution and financing have allowed series with predominantly Latina/o elements to counter or ignore the Latino Threat Narrative by utilizing a greater number of Latina/o voices in the creative process.[1] Netflix's *Narcos* (2015-present) and The CW's *Jane the Virgin* (2014-present) are used as two test cases that show how Latina/o voices within this particular industrial environment, both behind and in front of the camera, lead to greater Latina/o character complexity on screen that goes beyond simplistic negative representations and whitewashing, or the portrayal of Latina/o characters with little to no connections to a Latina/o community or identity. Thus, these two series are used to demonstrate how recent televisual entertainment is challenging the Latino Threat Narrative.

Netflix's drama, *Narcos*, is the first American distributed television program to tell the story of Pablo Escobar. Developed by the U.S.'s Chris Brancato and Eric Newman and Brazilian José Phadilha, the show features an international cast and crew. The show is also unique for being "bilingual," with equal dialogue in both English and

[1] Amanda Lotz (2014) has argued for three distinct periods of television: network era, multi-channel era and post-network era. The post-network era begins in the early 2000s, due to pronounced changes in competitive norms and industry operations. Some characteristics of the post-network era include new technology (i.e. DVR, VOD, Smartphones and Tablets), new distribution (Netflix, Hulu, Amazon) and how audiences are measured (8-9).

Spanish with English subtitles.[2] Set in Colombia, the show centers on DEA Agent Steve Murphy and his partner Javier Peña's hunt to track down and extradite the notorious Colombian drug lord to the U.S. The program also serves as a character study of Escobar himself, featuring a humanized villain with a complex narrative.

The dramedy *Jane the Virgin* premiered on The CW in the fall of 2014. It is based off of Venezuelan telenovela, *Juana la Virgen* (2002). *Jane*, developed in the U.S. by non-Latina Jennie Snyder Urman, centers around 23 year old Venezuelan and Mexican-American, Jane Villanueva, a religious woman and virgin who is accidentally artificially inseminated. She lives with her mother, Xiomara, who had her at 16, and her abuela, Alba. Set in Miami, the show includes religious and Latina/o cultural themes, as well as commentary on immigration and Latina sexuality.

While both shows have their shortcomings, the purpose of my research is to evaluate how each show situates, responds to, and counters ideologies of the Latina/o threat, in terms of the narratives they are telling. *Narcos* humanizes a notorious narco[3] terrorist and strays from stereotypical crime genre conventions, while *Jane the Virgin* reconsiders Latina fertility, issues of immigration and presents a more inclusive vision of Miami. Although both shows contribute to the number of Latina/os on television connected to crime or other unfavorable images, such as Latina teen pregnancy, the purpose of my research is to answer Jason Ruiz's (2015) call for a "better understanding of how cultural texts construct and disseminate their visions of Latinidad, even when those imaginings perform cultural work (as in associating Latinos with criminality) that

[2] Spanish *with English subtitles* is significant because it helps non-Spanish speaking audiences to see Spanish-speaking characters as equally intelligent and articulate to English-speaking characters.
[3] Narco is short for narcotraficantes, or illegal drug traffickers. For historical context see Steven Hyland (2011) and Gabriela Recio (2002), in addition to the work of Menno Vellinga and Mexican Scholar Luis Astorga.

runs counter to the political aims of Latino studies" (54). In other words, rather than focus on negative or positive portrayals, the complexity and potential impact of Latina/o characters and their narratives in the media needs to be researched further. If one of the purposes of Latina/o studies is critical awareness and engagement as a tool in the fight for social justice, then further consideration of the connection between textual analysis and industrial practices can lead to a greater understanding of how dominant racial ideologies are constructed, as well as instruct scholars and industrial workers alike on how to build more inclusive narratives.

My research questions are these: how do the constructions and representations of Latina/os in *Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin* defy popular sentiment of the Latino Threat Narrative? How do both programs utilize post-network era television models of creation, distribution, marketing and financing to give Latino creators greater voice in the production process? How have industrial and popular texts covered the release and production of both shows and how do they contribute to new ways of considering representation in a post-network era? My research, therefore, consists of textual analysis of the episodes, including analysis of the narrative with attention to ideological discourses and character development, as well as discourse analysis of promotional texts, published interviews with cast and crew, and articles and reviews found in trade publications and popular journalism.

The Latino Threat Narrative

This first section offers an overview of the literature on the Latino Threat Narrative and its origins in U.S. news media. Chavez has established five components to the discourses surrounding what he has called the Latino Threat Narrative:

- Latinos are a reproductive threat, altering the demographic makeup of the nation.
- Latinos are unable or unwilling to learn English.
- Latinos are unable or unwilling to integrate into the large society; they live apart from the large society, not integrating socially.
- Latinos are unchangeable and immutable; they are not subject to history and the transforming social forces around them; they reproduce their own cultural world.
- Latinos, especially Americans of Mexican origin, are part of a conspiracy to reconquer the southwestern United States, returning the land to Mexico's control. This is why they remain apart and unintegrated into the larger society. (53)

Utilizing historical textual analysis, Chavez argues how each of the components above has had a significant presence in American news media texts.

I would like to expand on Chavez's research of two of the points above. To begin with, he describes how the concept of Latina/os as a reproductive threat first flourished in a post-1960s climate that feared an overall "world population threat," where a growing world census led to panics over the reported diminishing resources needed to sustain

human life.[4] Chavez cites a *U.S. News and World Report* article from 1977 as an example of the growing hostility toward Latina reproduction in particular. Amongst the concerns of the article was "that the fertility of Mexicans and their inability to produce jobs for their population would lead to greater pressure for future immigration to the United States" (84). Latina fertility as a threat discourse continued to grow throughout the 1980s and into the 90s as stereotypes – that Latino men were dominant and Latina women were submissive and saw having children as the essence of their existence – thrived. Journalists and academics alike wrote how these "pronatalist cultural values" were driven by the perceived devout Catholicism of Latina/os (85). Ultimately, the threat of Latina fertility comes down to a fear of the "Browning of America," where white Americans will no longer be the majority and brown bodies will threaten white hegemonic power.

I would like to briefly describe Chavez's case study of The Minuteman Project because it encompasses many of the components of the Latino Threat Narrative. The Minuteman Project was established to call on civilian volunteers to monitor a particular section of land in April 2005, across the Arizona-Mexico border where a high number of undocumented immigrants had been caught in previous months, in order to bring attention to what they believed was a weak U.S. immigration policy. Chavez argues that the event focused "on rights and privileges of citizenship, which, from the Minuteman Project's perspective, were losing their value as a result of immigration" (137). In other words, the Minutemen did what they thought the U.S. government was failing to do, protecting America from undocumented immigrants, who took jobs, public education and healthcare funding, and voting power away from white Americans. Further, Chavez

[4] This "World Population Threat" largely thrived on depictions of women from what were then considered third world countries being unable to control their reproduction and fertility.

establishes how the "media circus" surrounding the Minuteman Project, which garnered over 1,000 newspaper stories in 2005 alone, spread the Latino Threat Narrative (149). Indeed, regardless of the position taken in those stories, they still brought attention to the "threat" of undocumented immigrants from Mexico.

Of course, Chavez is not alone in tracking the Latino Threat Narrative in U.S. media. In research on the discourses surrounding California's passing of Proposition 187 in 1994, which restricted access of state public services including pre-natal care and early childhood education to undocumented immigrants and their families, Otto Santa Ana (2002) found that several negative metaphors were used during coverage leading up to the vote. Chiefly, immigrants likened to "dangerous waters" was the most common comparison found in analysis of 116 *Los Angeles Times* news stories. Journalists described California as "awash under a brown tide," and characterized immigrants as a "sea of brown faces" (72). Santa Ana found "Dangerous Waters" language in 58.2% of news stories. Those metaphors, he contends, "do not refer to any aspect of the humanity of the immigrants, except to allude to ethnicity and race. In contrast to such nonhuman metaphors for immigrants, U.S. society is often referred to in human terms" (73). Other prominent metaphors used to characterize Latina/os in the lead up to the vote included warfare and animal comparisons. Of course, Latina/os have long been excluded from the concept of "being American."[5] In more recent research, through an impressive analysis of more than 12,000 news media stories broadcast on the top four networks (CBS, ABC, NBC and CNN) during the year 2004, Santa Ana (2013) found that only 1% of stories dealt with Latina/o political, economic or cultural topics. Among those stories, two

[5] In addition to the work of Chavez (2013) and Santa Ana (2002, 2013), John Downing and Charles Husband (2005), as well as Edward Telles and Vilma Ortiz (2008) have documented how Latinos and in particular Mexican Americans have long been excluded from being perceived as "American."

Latina/o figures that dominated the broadcasts were of "the whitened figure who is indifferent to Latino injustice, and the brown-skinned criminalized other" (221). In other words, Latina/os in the news media can either be "whitened" and assimilated, and thus ignorant of issues facing their fellow Latina/os, or they are criminals, threatening the image of a white dominant America.

Although Chavez and Santa Ana's work largely responds to Latina/o media images in general, with emphasis on news stories, the discourse built by these sources can also be seen in fictional representation of Latina/os in American film and television. Indeed these themes and narratives have long been popular in relation to representations of Latina/os in these media, which I discuss in the next section.

The Latino Threat Narrative in Fictional American Film & Television

While this thesis ultimately focuses on narrative television, I find it important to include previous research on Latina/os in film, because Latina/os have largely had an invisible existence in American television until the early 2000s, save for one or two failed sitcoms or dramas per previous decade. S. Robert Lichter and Daniel Amundson (1997) were among the first to trace the history of Latina/o and other non-white representation in American television. They describe how the rise of ethnic comedies in the 1970s "offered an unaccustomed array of new roles for minorities" (64). The 1980s, however, saw an increase in "more sinister turns in Latino portrayals. Crime shows…presented Hispanic drug lords as major nemesis…they were among the nastiest criminals on TV" (66). Despite an increase in negative portrayals on procedurals, a number of failed sitcoms including *A.K.A. Pablo* (1984) and *I Married Dora* (1987-88) attempted to at least

increase the number of main roles for Latina/os on television. Through the late 1980s to early 1990s, however, Latina/o characters remained primarily supporting players and rarely had lead roles in television dramas and comedies.

Indeed, Beltrán (2016) has discussed how the majority of Latina/o television roles in English language programming in the 1980s and '90s were on ensemble shows set in law enforcement or medical settings (28). Even in the 2000s, the number of Latina/o roles on English language television has never correlated with the growing Latina/o population in the U.S. In other research, Beltrán (2015) has offered a number of reasons for the lack of quality roles for Latina/os, including a "lack of Latina/os at the table when it comes to writing and producing television" and a "fear of stereotyping…fear of portraying Latina/os in a manner deemed non-aspirational." Both of these arguments are key to my research on *Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin*, because I have considered the production elements of both shows and how both portray Latina/os in "non-aspirational" roles that complicate and transcend stereotyping.

I next turn to the work of Charles Ramírez Berg (2002), whose research focuses on Latina/o imagery in film. His research is significant because he examines the history of basic Latina/o stereotyping. Tracing back to the "bandido" trope from silent era films and later Classical Hollywood Westerns, Ramírez Berg argues that this stereotype lives on as the Latin American gangster/drug runner, who "ruthlessly pursues his vulgar cravings – for money, power, and sexual pleasure – and routinely employs vicious and illegal means to obtain them" (68). Other male stereotypes include the "male buffoon," who serves as the comic relief, and the male "Latin lover," who is the "possessor of a primal sexuality that [makes] him capable of making a sensuous but dangerous – and

clearly non-WASP – brand of love" (76). For females, Ramírez Berg argues that the "harlot" is a common Latina stereotype, who is "a slave to her passions, her conduct is simplistically attributed to her inherent nymphomania" (71). Likewise, other Latina stereotypes are tired solely to Latina sexuality. The "female clown" is portrayed as having her sexual allure negated and the "dark lady" is the "virginal, inscrutable, aristocratic" female Latin lover (76). These six stereotypes enable a Latino Threat Narrative to be found in fictional media, as well as the news media that Chavez and Santa Ana have studied. Ramírez Berg argues that all six contribute to an "othering" of Latina/os as inferior and as a threat to WASP norms and ideals (67). In particular, all three tropes of Latinas have strong connections to a lack of sexual impulse control, presumed lower intelligence and lack of integrity. The reproductive power of women, therefore, has long been seen as a threat to white hegemony.

Curtis Marez (2004) has also studied the representation of Latina/os in Hollywood film and television. Discussing Latino drug-war films specifically, Marez found that "poor people are condensed into the figure of the disposable extra. These extras often play the parts of the Latin American peasants who work for cocaine cartels, but their ultimate sacrifice within the film's actions sequences suggests the large disposability of poor people within the global economy" (21). In analysis of the film *Clear and Present Danger* (1994), in which Harrison Ford stars as a CIA director battling drug lords in Colombia, Marez describes how the Colombian villains are "liquidated without narrative remains, representing the 'disposable people' disappeared by the war on drugs" (21). In other words, the Latina/os in these films are given little to no characterization. Many times these films also include American Latina/os who are the sidekick to the white

protagonist and present only to be juxtaposed against the barbaric foreign non-westernized Latina/os on screen. In *Clear and Present Danger*, for example, Benjamin Bratt plays Captain Ramírez. These Latino "good guys" are given little screen time and consequently never given adequate characterization.

Significantly, Marez also explores the symbiotic relationship between the LAPD and Hollywood in the 1920s and 1930s. He brings historical insight to how "police press releases generated miniature narratives that resembled silent films and their intertitles…police reports invited readers to lose themselves in scenarios of Mexican criminality" that were meant to uphold "dominant power relations in Mexican Los Angeles" (153). Essentially, by positioning press releases as entertainment, the LAPD brought greater attention to the growing number of film images of Latina/os as the dangerous and/or sexually exotic others. They enabled the spread of stereotypes in pursuit of maintaining their dominant position in an increasingly diverse LA.

In terms of the depiction of Latina/os in fictional cop dramas, Jon Stratton (2009) has argued that network era NBC program *Miami Vice's* (1984-1990) remarkable popularity can be attributed to its "politics – so reassuring for mainstream, White America" (195). Indeed, the construction of Miami in the program is one of nostalgia where the city remains a tropical paradise for white Americans, free of migrants and organized crime, and a place where English remains the only language spoken (203). Despite the inclusion of lewd cop Lt. Marty Castillo played by Edward James Olmos, the diversity of other Latina/o characters was limited to the Latino drug runner stereotypes, which the "good guys" would take down on a weekly basis. In more recent work, Jason Ruiz (2015) found that the Latino characters in the program *Breaking Bad*, which

chronicles the life of a white high school science teacher turned meth dealer, lacked originality and fell into stereotyping in the same way that Ramírez Berg describes. His study focuses on the creation of Latinidad in *Breaking Bad*. He ultimately argues that, "Latinos' supposedly inherent criminality, their eccentric (sometimes excessive) performances of masculinity, their nearly abject lust for revenge, and their process as killers" are all apart of the characterization of the Latino villains in the show (40). Ruiz's discussion of *Breaking Bad* shows that these stereotypes remain present in even contemporary representation of Latina/os. Even if the white characters are no longer strictly the "good guys," their narrative complexity allows the audience to root for them. In *Breaking Bad*, sympathy is certainly meant to be with white protagonists Walter White, Skylar White, and Jessie Pinkman and not the Mexican drug lord Tuco Salamanca, for example.

How Voice Shapes Media

First, it is important to understand the concept of voice in more general theoretical terms. Throughout his body of scholarship Nick Couldry (2000, 2010) has considered the consequences of power within media industries. Most recently, he has considered the significance of valuing voice. He argues, "to deny value to another's capacity for narrative – to deny [their] potential for voice – is to deny a basic dimension of human life. A form of life that systematically denied voice would not only be intolerable, it would…barely be a culture at all" (7). Couldry contends that voice is socially grounded and requires a population at large and not isolation. He admits, "having a voice requires resources: both practical resources (language) and the (seemingly purely symbolic) status

necessary if one is to be recognized by others as having a voice" (7). In other words, it is important that we do not deny the voices or the narratives of Latina/os when creating a national discourse.[6]

Thus, in media studies, voice represents a specific characters' subjectivity. Applying Gerard Genette's concept of focalization to U.S. films, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (2014) have argued that, "Media liberalism, in sum, does not allow subaltern communities to play prominent self-determining roles, a refusal homologous to liberal distaste for non-mediated self-assertion in the political realm…The 'other' becomes a trampolin for personal sacrifice and redemption" (206). In other words, they are arguing that narratives of the oppressed are often told through the lens of a white protagonist. Minorities, even when the intention is to portray them in a positive light, are not allowed to carry their own stories, or have their own voice drive the plot.

Within Latino media studies specifically, Beltrán (2009) and Chon Noriega (2000) have considered how Chicanas/os have used television activism to have their voices heard. In her research on sitcom *Chico and the Man* (1974-1978), Beltrán found that despite boasting over sixty writers throughout its three season run, not a single Latina/o writer is present other than Freddie Prinze, who played Chico, and whose writing work went mostly un-credited (102).[7] Despite the narrative premise of the show demonstrating "the limitations of an all-white production team" (103), Beltrán argues that Prinze's confidence and charisma as a performer allowed for "whiteness rather than Latino identity [to occasionally be] made strange and de-centered" at times (105).

---

[6] For the purposes of my research, I use Couldry's definition of voice throughout as a measure of Latina/o representation in my study.

[7] It has recently come to light that Prinze did get a co-writing credit on at least one episode, "Chico Packs his Bags" (1976).

Ultimately, however, Prinze's voice as a comedian in his standup performances outside the show – and not as an actor on the series – allowed him to have greater influence as a social critic. Essentially, the significant difference being Prinze's authorial voice had greater agency within his own standup routines in comparison to the network constraints placed on the production and writing of *Chico and the Man*.

Considering Chicana/o artists specifically, Noreiga has documented how activists used their creative voices to fight against negative representations and for greater visibility in the mass media. Chicana/o film and Latina/o public affairs television programming in the 1960s and 70s became a response to Hollywood's negative representation and exclusion of Latina/os. As Noreiga documents, public television was key to broadcasting the voices and work of young Latina/o activist filmmakers in the 1970s. He finds it ironic that minorities acquired "'voice' [in public television] by way of an elite media culture susceptible to political pressures, precisely *because* it lacked both public support and commercial viability" (138). He questions whether it is possible to fight hegemonic racial disparity within the industry itself. These are questions that Vittoria Rodriguez and Mary Beltrán (2015) have continued to ask when considering the recent influx of production of Latina/o web series in the early 2010s. They have found that while there are several Latina/o producers continuing the traditions of the creators that Noreiga documents, including *rasquache* production strategies,[8] they are typically also looking to use online web series as an opportunity to show off their work and gain better funding or chances to create shows for mainstream networks (20-21).

[8] Rasquachismo, or "underdog aesthetics," in relation to film and television is a mode of production where "poor means are transformed into a aesthetic style or cultural stance" (Noreiga, 6). In Chicano cinema, it is a mode of stitching together something meaningful from very little, often times in blatant disregard to Hollywood production norms.

This calls into question how Latina/o voices in the media coincide with the concept of citizenship. Not every Latina/o can have their individual voice amplified by the media. The same is true for all voices. However, as Jillian Báez (2014) notes, "Latina/os' place within the nation is often thought to be not only imagined by the media, but also secured by the media" (281). In other words, Latina/os use the media to understand their status as Americans and their place within U.S. culture. The Latino Threat Narrative is the myth perpetuating the dangers of undocumented immigrants and the violence they bring, as well as the threat of overtaking white hegemonic power through greater numbers in population. This myth is reinforced by white voices (i.e. white executives and creators) in a predominantly white media industry. The purpose of my research is not to debunk the Latino Threat Narrative, but rather to investigate how more diverse voices in the media industry can lead to more complex narratives and a greater variety of Latina/o stories being told by Latina/o voices.

Latina/o voices are lacking in production as well. In a recent article on the landscape of Latina/os in the television industry, Frances Negrón-Mutaner (2014) found that from 2010-2012, Latina/os "accounted for less than 1 percent of the producers of new pilot shows…only 2 of 352 producers were Latinos, resulting in the stunningly low figure of 0.57 percent" (109). By 2013, a greater number of Latina/os were billed as writer, producer, and/or directors on network pilots, but the overall percentage of 2.24 percent still leaves a lot of room for growth. Negrón-Mutaner also describes the anxiety media executives face over the "diversity issue." Based on interviews with industry informants, she highlights five reasons why diversity initiatives have yet to be successful. Amongst the most problematic were the belief that "Latinos, in contrast to African

Americans, are perceived as recent immigrants and foreigners; hence, their inclusion is not understood as a public good. In the words of a guild advocate, 'Whites do not feel responsible. Their sense is 'I didn't do it'" (111). Another eye-opening issue illuminated by Negrón-Mutaner is the fear of displacement. She details how her interviewees worried that an increase in Latina/o writers, producers and directors would mean less jobs for them. Black creators echoed this fear of displacement, as well. She notes, "the fact that inclusion is largely understood in racial terms reinforces racial solidarity and perpetuates fears of others" (113). Essentially, Latina/os are even seen as a threatening source of power within the industry itself.

As the scholars reviewed in this section have shown, it is significant we look at production elements when considering representation because Latina/os have not been afforded the "status necessary," or social capital to make inroads in mainstream U.S. media industries. Thus, for the specific case studies I have chosen, I interrogate the intent of executives and creators as found in published interviews to gain better insight into the voices behind the scenes of *Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin*. How are Latina/o voices affecting the narratives told and the process of telling those narratives in post-network era television?

Television as Ideological Force

I am largely inspired by both Todd Gitlin's (1979, 2000) essay "Prime Time Ideology" and book *Inside Prime Time*, as well as Stuart Hall's work on ideological racism in popular culture. Conceptualized during the network era, Gitlin (1979) argues, "ideological hegemony is embedded in format and formula; genre; setting and character

type; slant; and solution" (519). While post-network era distribution allows us to rethink many if not all of the elements of media texts listed, Gitlin's move to industrial studies analysis of the executives deciding which stories were told is of most significance. Considering the network era, Gitlin finds that "the networks generate ideology mostly indirectly and unintentionally, by trying to read popular sentiment and tailoring their schedules toward what they think the cardboard people they've conjured up want to see and hear" (203). In other words, much of the hegemonic white and/or masculine hegemony present in television comes not from some conspiracy to "indoctrinate the helpless masses," but rather from a lack of diverse voices in offices and boardrooms of television executives (203). It further comes from the lack of the ability of those said executives to imagine diverse audiences. They green light what they know, and particularly what they know has worked in the past. Essentially, this notion has continued to evolve in a post-network era, where once one series becomes a smash hit, like Fox's *Empire* (2015-Present), executives are keen to find "the next *Empire*," which leaves Gitlin's notion of the "Triumph of the Synthetic" and recombinant culture still relevant today.[9]

Even if the ideology present in television narratives is unintentionally present or emphasized, its presence still has consequences. Stuart Hall (1981) acknowledges that the media is an institution of dominant ideological production. It produces:

> Representations of the social world, images, descriptions, explanations and frames for understanding how the world is and why it works as it is

[9] "One Black TV Writer on the 'Empire Effect': 'My Creative Parameters are limited.'" *The Hollywood Reporter*. 15 October 2015. Web. 14 May 2016.
In this article, a black screenwriter describes how even the popularity of a multiculturalist show like *Empire* can have a negative effect on the creative process. In other words, rather than look for other diverse black stories, executives will be too focused on more specific replications of that one show.

> said and shown to work…the media construct for us a definition of what race is, what meaning the imagery of race carries, and what the 'problem of race' is understood to be. They help to classify out the world in terms of the categories of race (90).

Indeed, Hall acknowledges the "double vision of the white eye" in which these images of race are often created by white executives for white audiences (91). Again the voices of the minority are missing from the representation of their own images in television and the greater media landscape.

Finally, I am inspired by the work of Herman Gray (1994). Gray establishes three discursive categories of sitcoms with respect to their depiction of blackness in the 1980s and 1990s. The first is assimilationist television, which completely ignores any political or complex dealings with race. These shows deal in color blindness and rarely incorporate any cultural differences in their portrayals of black characters. Second, Gray describes pluralist programming as shows where "African Americans face the same experiences, situations, and conflicts as whites except for the fact that they remain separate but equal" (87). This is the black utopian genre of shows that can represent cultural differences, but does not pay attention to any discourses of racism, exploitation or injustice facing minority populations. Gray argues that pluralist television shows, like assimilationist ones do not fight white hegemonic ideology. The third type, multiculturalist discourse, however, allows shows to deal explicitly with "the cultural politics of diversity" (90). In other words, issues of class struggle, cultural difference and black experience can be explored in these television shows. While Gray is specifically addressing the concept of blackness on television sitcoms in his argument, I think his

discursive models can be and should be applied to the study of other marginalized communities and their representations on television, such as Latina/os. Furthermore, I think his multiculturalist model of representation is still a goal programming should strive for today.

Of course the work of Gitlin, Hall and Gray responded to the network era, or in Gray's case, the beginning of the multi-channel era. Their contributions to the study of ideological negotiation tend to rely on the concept of mass audiences for television shows. Their arguments work so well because, in the network era, television largely operated as a national cultural forum. Horace Newcomb and Paul Hirsch (1983) argue that at that moment in time, television served as a "rhetoric of discussion," raising ideological questions and forming a space for the negotiation of dominant perspectives (566). The network era was also characterized by dominance of the big three networks: ABC, CBS, and NBC. Thus, channel scarcity enabled mass audiences that could collectively discuss daily broadcasts.

While we can measure contemporary representation the same way that scholars have analyzed representation throughout television history, the question becomes how has the significance of Latina/o televisual representation changed in a post-network era? Are consistent images of Latina/os as criminals in television dramas and dramedies having the same impact when seen by narrowcast audiences, as they might have when seen by mass audiences in the network era? How has the representation of Latina sexuality in the post-network era complicated and rebuked previous common stereotypes? Further, we must consider how television networks and distributors see diverse and progressive representation as part of their corporate strategy.

Amanda Lotz (2014) has argued that "phenomenal television" programming "retains the social importance attributed to television's earlier operation as a cultural forum despite the changes of a post-network era" (42). A program's status as phenomenal television hinges on the type of network airing the specific show, as well as its potential to create conversation amongst mainstream television viewers, and the themes, discourses and topics present in the narrative (42-44). Lotz emphasizes a final feature of phenomenal television as "having a tendency to break into unexpected gated communities" (44). In other words, phenomenal television complicates the discourse expected by the niche audiences watching a given program. Lotz cites the "deconstruction of patriarchal masculinity" in ESPN's fictional football drama *Playmakers* (2003) as an example of past phenomenal television programming. In other words, the incongruous nature of these programs catches viewers off guard by exposing them to ideology they are not used to or counting on. Despite the show's high ratings, ESPN canceled it after only one season due to pressure from the NFL, which did not like how it included domestic violence and homosexual storylines.[10]

What separates phenomenal television from Newcomb and Hirsch's television as a cultural forum, is Lotz's included consideration of industrial practices. In other words, it is less focused on a specific show as a text (although this is still important) and more inclusive of the discourses surrounding the program both in terms of industrial practices and reception. As I will discuss throughout this thesis, it is these elements combined that make *Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin* worthy sites of study. In addition they are shows that

[10] Sandomir, Richard. "PRO FOOTBALL; Citing NFL, EPSN Cancels 'Playmakers.'" *The New York Times*. 5 February 2004. Web 10 September 2016.

are changing how we should consider representation in the television industry in the post-network era.

Methodology

I have built my study based on models for industrial research suggested by Julie D'Acci (2004) and John Caldwell (2006, 2008). D'Acci's "circuit of media" contains four sites of concern with porous domains: the cultural artifact, its production, its reception, and the socio-historical context. She argues, "representations or texts emerge and can be studied at all four sites" (433). I show how representation can indeed be studied not just at the cultural artifact level, but also through the discourses constructed in promotion and production. In particular, I analyze what Caldwell has called "emic interpretive frames," or narratives put forth by the industry (128). In other words, how are the narratives put forth by above the line industrial workers (showrunners, directors, writers and actors) shaping the discourses surrounding their product (*Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin*)?

I have chosen *Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin* as my two test cases because both have been critically acclaimed, garnering several Golden Globe and Television Critic's Choice nominations each. Further, both shows are the result of post-network era production practices. *Narcos* is distributed by Netflix. We must recognize that Netflix is: a) a subscription based broadband-delivered video service (BDVS) and b) not a producer, but rather curator of episodic content. *Narcos* is financed and produced by two companies, Dynamo and Gaumont International Television (IMBD). Dynamo is a Colombia based audiovisual production company founded in 2006. Their website celebrates the company

as the market leader for foreign producers filming in Colombia. Gaumont International Television is the American division of the French company Gaumont. Established in 2011, the American arm is also a financer and producer of several other Netflix series, including thriller *Hemlock Grove* (2013-2015).[11] Indeed, only in the post-network era have digital series become powerful additions to popular culture discourses. *Jane* is an example of formatting, or bringing one successful story and narrative from one country to another. As mentioned above, the U.S. version of *Jane* airing on The CW is adapted from Venezuela's *Juana la Virgen*. The series has also been adapted in Poland, in addition to a second, more recent remake in Venezuela.

I have completed a textual analysis of the ten-episode first season of *Narcos,* paying particular attention to the first and final episode. For *Jane the Virgin*, I focused on the season one episodes "Chapter One," "Chapter Two," "Chapter Eight" and "Chapter Ten." I have paid particular attention to character development, narrative, and ideology in both shows. Further, as D'Acci reminds us, a study of the cultural artifact can and must "be conceived of and designed within the parameters of the four-part model" (434). Thus, analyzing industrial practices, including financing, distribution and promotion surrounding both shows, has given me a greater sense of how Latina/o voice has been used in the post-network era to increase complexity of Latina/o stories. Utilizing discourse analysis of reviews and other news coverage published in trade and popular journalism for both programs leads to a better understanding of how these shows are perceived by the creators and networks distributing them, as well as how they have been received by television influencers. Interviews in trade publications such as *Variety,*

[11] More information on Gaumont, including a full list of their productions can be found on their website: http://gaumonttelevision.com/#home

Deadline and *The Hollywood Reporter* were used to analyze how these shows are promoted and perceived. In terms of reception, I have drawn from critical reviews from established sources such as *The LA Times, New York Times* and *Entertainment Weekly*, as well as reviews from other television influencers found in various online sites, such as *The Ringer, Hitfix* and *The AV Club*. This analysis helps me to consider how both shows are reinforcing or subversive in their representations of the Latino Threat Narrative.

Pertaining to *Narcos* specifically, I have performed a textual analysis of the 46 critical reviews of the show listed on *Rotten Tomatoes*, as well of the several articles about the series I found in trade publications. Due to the nature of Netflix's distribution model of releasing entire seasons at once, I have found the largest concentration of press was published around the series release. In the broadcast model, however, a program is more likely to sustain or aspire to sustain press coverage throughout an entire season. For that reason, in the case of *Jane the Virgin*, I have analyzed press from a larger period of time. Rather than look at critical reviews posted on Rotten Tomatoes, I have used the show's Twitter presence to find and consider periods of press coverage throughout the first season. I have paid particular attention to the articles tweeted by *Jane* showrunner, Jennie Urman, the writer's room, and star Gina Rodriguez.

Through this analysis, I gain a better understanding of how both the production values and the episodic texts of *Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin* contribute to either a more nuanced or a retelling of the Latino threat in their narratives, as well as how they contribute to higher visibility of complicated and multicultural Latina/os in U.S. television. Specifically, I have focused on how the themes of immigration, religion, sexuality and drug violence are constructed in the two series. Through my textual,

industrial and discourse analysis, I demonstrate the thought and motives behind specific narrative choices made by the creators of each show. At a moment when President Trump, a majority of Republican Congressmen, and a significant number of the U.S. population have the strong conviction that the symbolic power of a wall between Mexico and U.S. is what our country needs to "be great again," my research is only timelier. We are reminded on a daily basis, the power the media has in negotiating racial ideologies.

Chapter Overview

This introduction has presented a summary of past research of the Latino Threat Narrative from both an anthropological and media studies perspective. Chavez and Santa Ana have argued that discourses of the Latino threat became prevalent in news media in the 1960s and 70s when the rapidly growing world population and the fear it caused was partly blamed on the fertility of Latinas and fertility of women in the global south generally. When considered with the work of Beltran, Ramírez Berg and Marez, I have fully developed the Latino threat discourse that I am exploring in this thesis, with its particular masculine elements of drug violence and feminine sexuality and fertility elements. In addition, I have discussed television's significance in building cultural ideologies and the role of voice in ideological negotiations.

Chapter 2, "Netflix's 'Narcos' Reconsiders the Latino Threat Narrative" focuses on the representation of Latinos in the first season of the Netflix original series. I begin the chapter with analysis of the first season, paying particular attention to both the first and last episode, as well as character development throughout the ten episodes. Next, utilizing discursive and industrial analysis, I bring insight to how the show has been

perceived of by its creators in popular and trade journalism. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of crime genre and argue that Netflix and the creators of *Narcos* are perhaps using non-stereotypical portrayals of Latina/os to ultimately reach an international audience. In particular, I discuss how the show was used as a "centerpiece series" in Netflix's expansion efforts in Spain and South America.

Chapter 3, "Jane the Latina Rule Breaker" examines how the CW series *Jane the Virgin* has created a multiculturalist vision of Miami that leaves the notion of the Latino Threat Narrative behind. The first part of the chapter consists of textual analysis of some of the formal elements of the program, character analysis, and an interrogation of Jane and the religious and feministic elements that make her a compelling Latina, whose depiction breaks from stereotypical representations. The second half of the chapter consists of discourse and industrial analysis of how the show has been perceived of by its creators, as well as the discourses surrounding *Jane* in popular and trade journalism. I investigate how social media drives these discourses through analysis of the Twitter pages of key *Jane* stakeholders. Finally, using this analysis, I argue that not only is *Jane* ignoring the Latino Threat Narrative onscreen, but also it is creating a discussion around the types of Latina/o stories told by the television industry itself. Indeed, star Gina Rodriguez has utilized increased visibility to become an empowered and vocal proponent of greater diversity in Hollywood.

In my conclusion, I expand on how both *Narcos* and *Jane the Virgin* have used post-network era production elements to tell complex Latina/o narratives. In the case of *Narcos*, by breaking certain crime genre conventions, it is able to tell a story of the narcotics drug trade in Colombia that remains nuanced and unbiased. *Jane the Virgin*

situates itself outside of a threat narrative by letting its women be defined by more than just their sexuality and tackling issues such as immigration reform. Despite their progressive nature in a white dominant U.S. media industry, I contemplate how their ideological negotiations and use of Latina/o voice remain limited.

Chapter 2: Netflix's *Narcos* Reconsiders the Latino Threat Narrative

The Latino involvement in international drug trade is currently a hot theme in fictional television. Starting with *Breaking Bad* (2008-2013), the topic has recently been explored in shows like FX's *The Bridge* (2013-2014) and USA's *Queen of the South* (2016-present). Netflix's *Narcos* (2015-present) is one of the latest series to set itself in the world of narco terrorism and the DEA agents who will do anything to stop it. The show, however, takes the unique perspective of focusing on the beginning of Latino involvement in the Colombian drug trade and tracing the rise of the notorious Pablo Escobar. The ten-hour fictional series is the first released by an American distributor to take a deeper look at Escobar and the Medellín Cartel. The show has received critical acclaim and was nominated for two Golden Globe Awards in January 2016.

The title, *Narcos*, comes from the term narcoterrorism, or the attempts of narcotics traffickers to intimidate or influence governments through acts of violence and terror. Narco, or narcos, is short for narcotraficantes. The terms narco-trafficking and traffickers being labeled narcos first appeared in Latin American newspapers and media in the early to mid 1900s to describe families or businesses that were trafficking marijuana to the U.S. and other countries (Recio 2002). Mexico, which dominated marijuana production throughout the mid 1900s, cracked down on growers after being prodded by the U.S., through Operation Condor in 1975. This allowed Colombia to seize the marijuana market and become the most dominant player in narcotics trafficking (Hyland 2011). Further, the rise of Augusto Pinochet in Chile, which is also chronicled in the first episode of *Narcos*, allowed Colombian smugglers to take over the role of

Chilean cocaine producers and smugglers who were largely executed after democracy was overthrown in their country. *Narcos*, the series, begins with the suggestion that a Chilean drug chemist, Mateo "Cuca" Moreno brings the cocaine business to Colombia.

Netflix released all 10 episodes of the first season of *Narcos* on August 28, 2015. It tells the story of the rise of Pablo Escobar, the drug kingpin of the Medellín Cartel, notorious for its ruthless and violent illegal drug trade business procedures. The show takes place between the late 1970s through 1992. Other significant members of the Medellín Cartel portrayed in the show include Escobar's cousin Gustavo, the Ochoa brothers, Gacha, and hitmen Poison and La Quica. Anglo American DEA Agent Steve Murphy is the main protagonist. His partner is Texan born Mexican American Javier Peña. The agent's Colombian ally and confidant is Police Chief Horacio Carrillo. Carrillo is incorruptible and wants to see Escobar pay for his terrible crimes. The 28th President of Colombia César Gaviria and his Chief of Security Eduardo Sandoval are also significant characters in later episodes, when they are forced to negotiate with Escobar for the release of hostages and to put an end to the bombings and violence Escobar has conducted.

This chapter begins with a textual analysis of *Narcos* season one. I have chosen to analyze in depth both the first and tenth (last) episode, as well as character development throughout the season in my analysis. By paying particular attention to episode one, "Decenso," I start by discussing how *Narcos* situates the Latino threat within its narrative. Second, I consider how themes of Colombian class inequality and Colombian government agency nuance and provide voice to non-stereotypical Latina/o representation. Lastly, I argue that by the season one finale the show has broken crime

genre conventions by establishing the Anglo protagonist to be just as despicable a character as Escobar himself. Indeed, the season ends with vague directions as to where sympathies should lie. Following my textual analysis is a discussion of the discourses present in popular journalism and trade publications in regards to *Narcos.* I bring insight to the perception of the show by both its creators and by television critics and influencers. Through analysis, I establish how production elements of the show enable it to reconsider the Latino Threat Narrative. Finally, I consider how *Narcos* is a "centerpiece series" for Netflix in its Latin American market expansion. Despite the American company's efforts, I note the show's mixed reception from certain global audiences.

Analysis

Textual Analysis of Themes and Characters in Narcos

The stakes of the war on international cocaine distribution to the US are laid out in the first episode of season 1 of *Narcos*. The episode,"Decenso," introduces us to our American protagonist, Anglo DEA Agent Steve Murphy. Murphy is also responsible for the narration. Through his narration, Murphy helps the audience follow some of the more complex plotlines, but more significantly he also includes his own opinions and internal motivations. In other words, while *Narcos* may appear to be the story of Pablo Escobar, it is really the story of Steve Murphy's growing intentions to kill Escobar. Murphy is the epitome of America. He is white, has a southern accent, is patriotic and emphasizes his faithfulness to his wife.

In "Decenso," he paints a picture of a pre-cocaine-infested Miami in 1979, where as a young agent he signed up to serve for the "sand, surf and women." Murphy and his Miami partner and friend, Kevin Brady, are shown running through the sunny shore-lined

streets busting flip-flop wearing hippies for marijuana. A successful bust of "one kilo of grass" causes laughs and celebration. Once cocaine hit the streets, however, seizing 60 kilos a day became the norm. "Pablo's coke flooded in; it didn't take long for Miami to get addicted," narrates Murphy. In juxtaposition to the scene of Murphy and Brady running down hippies, we are shown the pair chasing brown bodies through a dark alley lit by broken neon lights. A rat circles a bullet-ridden corpse. "The hippies had been replaced by Colombians and these guys didn't wear flip-flops…The Miami coroners said Colombians were like dixie cups: use them once, then throw them away," Murphy recites. Through this scene alone, the creators invoke the Latino Threat Narrative to depict a Miami that has fallen into a dark and violent chaos. Even Murphy's narration of a "flooded" Miami recalls Santa Ana's rhetoric of dangerous waters metaphors that can characterize Latina/os as a threat (68). Colombians, disposable like "dixie cups," brings to mind the Latina/o extras in drug war films of the late 1980s and early 1990s that Marez argued represented the expendable poor brown populations. In one of the final scenes of the episode, one of Escobar's key assassins La Quica screams with rage and murders Murphy's partner by unleashing a shower of bullets into him and a Colombian informant. Although caught by Murphy, once in court a smiling La Quica is set free on bail and shown returning to Colombia having gotten away with the murder of Brady.

By the end of episode one, the audience has an idea of Murphy's impetus for his commitment to fighting in the war on the illegal drug trade. The audience is shown Miami, a city he first described as a "paradise," destroyed by the distribution of Colombian cocaine. The audience also sees his partner killed by La Quica. Most tellingly, his patriotic language gives us a sense of his motivations:

> My dad volunteered to fight in World War II because of Pearl Harbor. But you think he knew anyone in Hawaii? No way. He was a West Virginia farm boy, but these fuckers stepped on our soil. So he laced up his army boots and went to fight. It was his duty. Cocaine in Miami? Kilos from Colombia? This was my war. This was my duty. And I was ready to fight it.

Not only does this dialogue continue to allude to a Latino Threat Narrative by establishing Colombians as the "fuckers" of this new war on drugs threat to the U.S., but it also demonstrates Murphy's entitlement as an American going to Colombia to protect the U.S. from these lesser people. Significantly, he also compares this threat to WWII, which is a grave comparison considering the outcome of that war established the great world powers. Rhetorical references to his father, fighting, and duty further establish his masculine image and alpha persona. Indeed, the character of Steven Murphy in the first episode of *Narcos* recalls *Miami Vice's* Sonny Crocket or even Jack Bauer in *24* (2001-2010; 2014)

"Decenso," however, ends with a contradiction. One year after first arriving in Colombia, Murphy narrates, "All that patriotic bullshit was out the window…If there's one thing I've learned in the Narco world, it's that life is more complicated than you think. Good and bad, they're relative concepts. In the world of drug dealers, you do what you think is right and hope for the best." Visually, the audience sees Murphy taking pictures of the aftermath of a Colombian police operation. The camera pans over dead narco-criminals, but also innocent civilians. The "good" and "bad" that Murphy speaks of, are indeed, what the series hopes to explore.

Consequently, while the first episode of *Narcos* may appear to set the viewer up for another triumphant victory for good versus evil, the rest of the first season complicates and nuances those binaries. First, the theme of class struggle and the inability of social class movement between those born poor and those born into bourgeois society in Colombia legitimize the motivations of Pablo Escobar and some of the rest of the Medellin cartel. The second theme of bearing responsibility for the endless violence and destruction on both sides of the drug war in Colombia is used to drive the plot. American DEA Agents Steve Murphy and Javier Peña in particular often find themselves questioning whether or not they should be burdened with the deaths of informants, Colombian government officials, and narco-criminals. Questions of personal vendettas versus the greater good are also considered in later episodes. As previously established, however, imagery of the Latino Threat Narrative still plays a large role in the show. Medellín Cartel hit men Poison and La Quica are still stereotypical bandido/drug runner types as defined by Ramírez Berg and Ruiz. Colombian government and police officials demonstrating great agency in the battle against narco-terrorism, however, contribute to a greater diversity of Latino representations in *Narcos*.

Criticisms of Class Systems in Narcos

The first prominent theme of the series, that of disparate class systems, is used in a particularly useful way to humanize Pablo Escobar. Throughout the series, Escobar's working-class background is consistently mentioned. While pursuing a short-lived political career, he campaigns on the promise of a slum-free Medellín. Reporter Valeria Velez characterizes Escobar as "un Robin Hood paisa," or a comrade of the slums. For a while, his title may even be deserved, as the viewer learns that he built over 400 houses,

several soccer fields, and medical clinics to serve the people living in slums. In other words, Escobar is providing a service to the poor that the government is not. He has recognized the need to improve life for the impoverished. In episode two, "The Sword of Solomon Bolivar," Escobar exclaims, "For decades, our country has been led by Lopez and other families that are wealthy who made their fortune off exploiting the poor. They don't know the dreams of the common people, but I do." While this campaign rhetoric is used in what sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) would call a "front performance," presented to the public, the audience also sees the "back performance," of his private life. In episode three, "The Men of Always," for example, he confides in Valeria that "Those shitty oligarchs, those people, all of their lives don't know what it's like to wonder where their next meal is coming from. I come from nothing." He tells her this while taking a bath. The nakedness of the two characters signifies the vulnerability of their conversation, but also that Escobar has nothing to hide from her. He is proud that he is a man who has come from the slums to become a man who holds an astounding amount of power.

Becoming a God-like figure to the poor allows him to earn a seat in Congress. Later in "The Men of Always," when Escobar enters his first Congressional meeting, the audience learns one of the most significant internal complexities of the character. He is so far removed from the bourgeois world of politics, the "oligarchs," as he calls them, that he arrives unaware that you cannot enter the building without a tie. He buys one from a guard on the steps. Inside, the Minister of Justice accuses Escobar of being a narco and embarrasses him by revealing an enlarged mug shot from an earlier arrest. Much credit should be given to Wagner Moura for his performance; from the second Escobar takes a seat in the Congressional Chamber you can sense his nervousness. He fidgets, keeps

adjusting his tie and looks around constantly, as if someone might ask him to leave. Once the mug shot is revealed his eyes become bloodshot and the viewer can feel the shame Escobar feels. The minister's proclamation of "You're not welcome here!" is not only addressed to Escobar the criminal, but also Escobar the poor boy from Medellín. The significance of class if further established when Escobar's wife Tata consoles him: "Oh Pablito. We knew they wouldn't accept you in that circle…You're too good for them, Pablito." Escobar's sullen face implies that he concurs with his wife's assessment. Not being "accepted…in that circle," infers that the poor and the wealthy will continue to exist in separate spheres at this point in time in Colombia.

In a later episode, "La Gran Mentira," Escobar's cousin, friend and most valued partner, Gustavo, is killed by Colombian Police. At this point, Escobar is responsible for several narco terrorist acts that have killed hundred of innocent civilians. Gustavo's death shocks him and he is seen crying into his mother's arms. She recalls a story of when the cousins were young kids. They would bike into the mountains out of sight and sound of their parents. When they returned, Gustavo would tell Escobar's mom, his aunt, they were "higher than clouds." "He always wanted to go further," Escobar tells her. Growing up in the slums, Escobar and his cousin always dreamed of going "further" and "higher," away from their impoverished upbringing. This story grounds Escobar's character. Yes, he is despicable, but he is a man who has defied the chances to become a man of power. Now even the oligarchs bow down to him. The theme of social mobility and economic hierarchies of power are significant to Escobar's characterization. He is not a cookie cutter villain; instead *Narcos* succeeds in humanizing him in specific moments. Pablo

Escobar has killed over 1000 police officers and thousands of civilians, but is still humanized within this narrative.

Unfortunately, character refinement is mostly afforded solely to Escobar, rather than the other Medillín Cartel associates. As previously mentioned, La Quica is presented as a ruthless hit-man who kills Murphy's first partner, Brady, in a Miami drive-by. By the third episode, Quica and Poison, another one of Escobar's top hit men, have an argument over whether or not Poison has killed sixty-four or sixty-five people. When Quica claims that he actually was the one who killed the "faggot" that Poison says is his sixty-fifth murder, Poison drives the car they are in into an innocent passerby and claims, "Look! 65, man!" Quica, with a look of bewilderment on his face, laughs. This is not the only heinous act committed by Poison and Quica in the series. The audience sees the pair do much of Escobar's dirty work, including shooting Colombian police and DEA informants point blank in the head. In an early moment in episode six, "Explosivos," Poison uses a machine gun to unleash a countless number of bullets into two young Colombian police officers. Poison reaches a new low in episode seven, "You Will Cry Tears of Blood." To cover up the bombing of a Colombian airline that killed 107 innocent passengers, Escobar has sent him and a few other narcos to kill the widow of the man he conned into carrying the bomb onto the plane. The woman clings to an unnamed narcos' leg begging for her life, but Poison shoots her in the head while she is still holding on. Next he turns his attention to her two-year-old daughter. Agents Murphy and Peña intercede before Poison kills the baby. Ultimately, Poison and many of the other nameless killers in the Medillín cartel contribute to a plethora of stereotypical Latino drug runner caricatures.

Analysis of Colombian Government Agency

On the other hand, Colombian government officials are shown to be resilient and complex characters that are forced to operate under pressure from U.S. officials, Colombian politicians, and the narcos themselves. Early in Escobar's reign of terror, Minister of Justice Rodrigo Lara is one of the first Colombians shown to get into an entanglement with the Medellín Cartel. Early in the third episode, "The Men of Always," Lara is seen meeting with Escobar's lawyer Fernando Duque. Duque attempts to convince Lara that Escobar is a transparent and honest businessman with no connection to drug trafficking crimes he has been alleged of committing. Lara caves to Duque's offer of monetary support in exchange for permitting Escobar to run as an alternate seat in congress. Escobar's "clean" record free of arrests enables him to keep the public's and the government's good will in the election process. To get the Colombian government to react to Escobar's criminality, Agents Murphy and Peña are forced to find evidence of a past arrest. Once they find an old mugshot, they bring it Minister Lara, who asks the Americans how long they have had it:

> Minister Lara: What am I doing here?
>
> U.S. Ambassador: It's not America's role to get involved in other country's elections.
>
> Minister Lara: Once again the hand of the United States remains invisible.
>
> U.S. Ambassador: Your party took money from Escobar. I should think you'd want to get ahead of this.
>
> Minster Lara: Everyone took money. By the way it's all American money, so why don't you take this to the press? [referring to Escobar's mugshot]
>
> U.S. Ambassador: It's up to you. You're the Minister of the Justice.

The exchange establishes America's role in creating great demand for Colombia's cocaine, as well as implicating the American government as having a history of interfering in the politics of several Latin American countries. The U.S. ambassador's sly delivery of her lines reads as a criticism of American policies. Although Minister Lara gives in to her subtle threat, he turns what could be considered U.S. interference into an impassioned plea for the Colombian government to put an end to corruption and allowing drug money to influence their policies. "In my eyes, the sin of turning a blind eye is as great as the sin of outright corruption," he tells the congress. Consequently, his bravery as one of the first politicians to speak out against corruption connected to the illegal drug trade gets him killed. Escobar has him assassinated in a drive by shooting.

What ultimately becomes one of Escobar's greatest motivations for causing chaos is the Colombian-U.S. extradition treaty that would enable him *and* any number of cartel members throughout Colombia to be potentially extradited to the U.S. to face punishment for their crimes. Escobar is shown to be so outraged by the "gringos" involvement in trying to stop his cartel that he has presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galán assassinated. He attempts to also kill his predecessor candidate, Cesar Gaviria, by bombing Avianca Flight 203. Gaviria, however, is persuaded to not take the flight by Agent Murphy at the end of episode 6, "Explosivos." Episode 7, "You Will Cry Tears of Blood," picks up with the aftermath of the plane bombing that killed 107 innocent passengers and crew. The episode suggests that the act is one of the first to brand Escobar a "terrorist." Gaviria's anti-narcos campaign rhetoric helps win him the election in a landslide after the incident.

Once elected, Gaviria is portrayed as untrusting of the Americans. At a party celebrating his election, he asks for advice from former Colombian president, Julio César

Turbay. Turbay tells him to trust his instincts, and more importantly, to be careful of the Americans. In one of his first meetings with the U.S. Ambassador, Agents Murphy and Peña, and a CIA representative, he and his Vice Minister of Justice, Eduardo Sandoval make it clear that they do not want American troops on the ground and American spy planes in the air listening to civilian conversations. Gaviria makes is clear that, "Bringing Escobar to justice is my number one priority, but we will do so on our own terms and our own resources." The Americans stress that all they want to do is help Gaviria capture Escobar. Gaviria curtly responds: "Your government's research says 660 tons of cocaine were consumed in the United States last year. Perhaps if your resources were focused at home, we'd all be better off." This scene importantly establishes that there is not single stream of power in the war on illegal drug trade in Colombia. On one side you have the Americans who go behind the Colombians government's back to use spy planes illegally to gather intel on Escobar's sicarios. At the same time, however, Gaviria is resilient in his decision to not negotiate with Escobar. He further critiques the U.S. for not doing enough to curb demand for Colombia's cocaine. Essentially, Gaviria is depicted as no puppet of the U.S.

At the same time, Gaviria is forced to make tough decisions and cave to internal and external political pressures to ensure greater safety for the people of Colombia. After the kidnapped daughter and beloved journalist of former President Turbay is mistakenly killed in a police raid, Gaviria is compelled to finally enter transparent negotiations with Escobar to put an end to the violence plaguing innocent victims. He accepts Escobar's terms of pleading guilty to a single count of narco-trafficking and building his own prison.

Eduardo Sandoval, Vice Minister of Justice, too, is one of Colombia's government officials to show great agency in *Narcos*. In "La Gran Mentira," after Gaviria has made his intentions clear that he will be forced to accept Escobar's deal, Sandoval meets with the U.S. ambassador, as well as Murphy and Peña to discuss how to proceed in defeating the illegal drug trade. Sandoval stresses the hard place the Colombian government is in; they must stop the bombings and violence. Murphy and Peña, however, fight his concerns. Sandoval fights back: "You want Escobar? Why? Why? Because you want to parade him around in your DEA jackets? You think this is a game, right? This is Colombia and our people want peace. This is not a fucking game!" Sandoval's outburst combats the motivations of the Americans. Unlike Murphy and Peña, he is not concerned about public relations; he is concerned about the endless amount of Colombian casualties.

The Burden of Responsibility in Narcos

Ultimately as I have established above, *Narcos* offers a range of stereotypical and non-stereotypical bandido/drug runner trope Latino characters. Where the show goes beyond current and past television trends in the representation of Latina/o characters is its inclusion of strong, strategic and authoritative Colombian government officials. Characters such as Lara, Gaviria, and Sandoval are Latino characters that are not tied directly to violence or sexuality. Further, they are not the "gringos'" best friends either. They are shown to present great agency in their negotiations with and dismissal of U.S. Government officials and policy.

The question becomes, with whom is the audience's sympathy meant to lie? Escobar? The U.S. DEA Agents? The Colombian government? Indeed, the prominent theme of "good" versus "bad" is used to help understand each character and confront this

question. As I have previously discussed, Escobar is initially presented as a populist character whose thirst for power is born from growing up in the slums of a highly class-segregated Colombia. After the death of Gustavo, however, Escobar becomes erratic and suffers from greater paranoia. Significantly, before episode nine, "La Catedral," Escobar certainly orchestrates violence, including ordering the bombing of Avianca Flight 103 and the assassinations of countless government officials, police officials and rival cartel members. Yet the audience rarely sees him commit these violent acts with his own hands. In an eye-opening scene of "La Catedral," however, Escobar is shown beating the men he has entrusted with daily cartel operations while he is in jail to death with a pool stick. The audience witnesses the unhinged Escobar become further and further drenched in blood with each strike. The imagery of this scene makes it clear that despite the presentation of his internal complexities, Escobar remains a character whose life is not glorified.

Neither are Agents Murphy and Peña easily sympathetic characters. Indeed, throughout the first season they too complicate the binary of "good" and "bad." Together, they grapple with protecting their informants, going over the heads of the Colombian government to further their own cause, and whether to feel guilty over killing narco-terrorists. Peña's character is introduced in a scene in which he is having intercourse with a prostitute informant. He is using her for information on where Escobar's next meeting will be, and she uses him in hopes to get a visa to the U.S. In the office the next day, the U.S. Ambassador tells Peña that informant money better not being going to prostitutes. He lies and is later seen gazing at a female office worker on his way out of the office. Essentially, Peña is introduced as a womanizer. In "The Men of Always," he asks Murphy if he has seen any prostitutes, seemingly unaware that Murphy would want to be

faithful to his marriage. The audience is also told that Peña has a favorite brothel, and he sleeps with other informants in later episodes. These images run dangerously close to Ramírez Berg's Latin lover stereotype. In particular how Peña is initially positioned against his white partner in the first few episodes could be considered problematic.

However, Peña's character evolves throughout the first season. He is shown to be extremely loyal to informants, risking his own life to save theirs, including the prostitute who he is first shown having relations with. In a scene of "The Sword of Simon Bolivar" when she does not leave a party she was serving, Peña refuses to leave Medellín until he finds her. Later, in the episode "The Palace in Flames," Peña and Murphy get the name of former CIA agent Barry Seal, who is working for Escobar after Police Chief Carillo tortures an unnamed narco for information. Murphy wants to turn the agent in, but Peña's reluctant because it will almost assuredly get Seal killed:

> Peña: I have a code of ethics when it comes to informants.
>
> Murphy: But not when it comes to torturing suspects with hot coffee.
>
> Peña: You know, I wouldn't judge Carillo.
>
> Murphy: Why is that?
>
> Peña: You had a partner killed; he's had a dozen.

This exchange demonstrates the stakes of the drug war in Colombia. By turning in Seal's evidence, they will be able to connect Escobar to communists and therefore get more funding from the CIA, but in doing so he will be killed. Peña believes in protecting the informant Seal and finding another way to get the CIA involved, Murphy disagrees and goes behind his back. Seal is shot dead by Escobar's men, and Peña tells his partner that this death should rest on his conscience. Essentially, even if Peña is a womanizer, he and

Murphy are both forced to operate outside of the lines of clearly "good" or "bad." Peña is more than just a Latin lover. Indeed, at the end of the first season, in "Despegue," he surprisingly puts his mission of killing Escobar over the good will of his relationship with Murphy. When Murphy refuses to trade information with the rival Cali Cartel to get a chance to finally capture Escobar, Peña leaks incriminating photos of Murphy conducting illegal operations to Cali leader Pacho Herrera. Herrera uses the information to blackmail Murphy into working together, with the collective goal of killing Escobar once and for all.

Agent Murphy's characterization takes even more dire turns than Peña's. As I have described above, Ramírez Berg describes the Latino drug runner as someone who "ruthlessly pursues his vulgar cravings" (68). By the final episode, Murphy too, is ruthlessly pursuing the death of Escobar. Tellingly, in one of the first scenes of episode nine "La Catedral," Murphy is in the car with his wife and newly adopted daughter, when he rear-ends a taxi in front of him. He gets out of the car to confront the visibly upset driver. The taxi driver yells at him in Spanish, "You don't even speak Spanish, get out of here…son a bitch. Are you gonna hit me? What the hell have you come here for?" Murphy, unable to communicate, pulls out a gun and points it at his face. He then shoots the taxi's wheel, before getting back in his own car and talking to his wife like nothing had even happened. In this moment, Murphy is not only meant to represent U.S. imperialists interfering with Colombian affairs, but he is also shown to have lost all tolerance. He gets angry because the taxi driver yells in Spanish, a language he does not speak, so he asserts his power and self-perceived greater status as a white man by pulling out his gun. At the end of the season one finale, "Despegue," Murphy tells the audience:

> Less than an hour after Escobar escaped La Catedral, word had spread all over Colombia that war was coming again. But this time would be different. This time there would be no surrender, no negotiations, no deals. This time we were gonna kill him. Escobar said, 'Better a grave in Colombia than a cell in the US.' Well, guess what, motherfucker? That works for me.

Again, this dialogue is indicative that this is Murphy's story and it also insinuates how his mission in Colombia has become personal, rather than looking out for the greater good of the U.S. or the innocent victims of the Latino drug trade. Murphy's war is no longer about the drugs; it is about killing Escobar. Escobar might be orchestrating violence, but by the end of the season finale, Murphy's ruthlessly pursuing a personal obsession. His wife asks him if they can go home. "This is home," he tells her.

Together, Agents Murphy and Peña unethically leak information or put pressure on the Colombian government to force them to act. For example, in "La Catedral," after the U.S. ambassador and Colombian President have given in to Pablo Escobar's demands to let him build his own prison to stay in while serving his time, Murphy and Peña take matters into their own hands. Using aerial surveillance given to them by Colombian Police Chief Carillo, they are able to provide evidence that Escobar murdered Medellín Cartel members Kiko Moncada and Fernando Galeano inside the prison grounds. After the Colombian government refuses to take action, preferring a period of peace to violence, the agents leak the photos to the press. Essentially they force the Colombian government to act and take responsibility once and for all.

President Gaviria is forced to react to the public outcry from the leaked photos. He sends the Colombian army to Escobar's prison the capture and bring him to Bogotá to face repercussions. Not sure who he can trust, he sends Vice Minister Sandoval as well to ensure a successful mission. Sandoval arrives to find the army has only surrounded the prison and not taken Escobar into custody. He enters the prison to retrieve Escobar, only to be taken hostage by him and his men. Forced to make a decision between negotiating for Sandoval's release or taking the prison to capture Escobar, Gaviria decides to risk his vice minister's life and have the army enter the prison with weapons raised. "This time we will not negotiate…If Sandoval dies, I will have it on my conscious for the rest of my life. But my country comes first, and I will not empower Escobar," he says. Essentially, Gaviria chooses rationality over emotion. He is able to risk the life of his most trusted confidant and friend, Sandoval, in exchange for finally putting an end to Colombia's war with Escobar. Gaviria's delivery of the order is full of conviction, forcing the audience to respect his decision and root for its success. Sandoval survives, but Escobar escapes, leading to Murphy's narration discussed above that brings an end to the first season of *Narcos*.

Narcos *and the Crime Drama Narrative*

I have established above the plethora of Latino representations, both complex and stereotypically reductionist, in Netflix's *Narcos*. In this section, I use that textual analysis and discourse analysis of critical reviews of the program's first season to consider how the series breaks crime genre conventions. I also want to take this opportunity to position *Narcos* in its rightful place amongst episodic programming that features large numbers of Latina/o cast members. In my opinion, *Narcos* should be in conversation with shows like

Miami Vice and FX's *The Bridge* (2013-2014). Discourse analysis of the critical reviews of the first season of *Narcos*, however, largely ignored the show's connection to past Latino centric crime genre hits. Headlines like "Netflix's 'Narcos' tries to the be 'The Wire' for Colombia's Drug War" that topped Inkoo Kang's (2015) review of the series for *The Village Voice* encourage to reader to automatically consider the show in the same arena of television as *The Wire*, which is largely considered to be one of the greatest series of all time. Publications ranging from *Salon*, to *The Hollywood Reporter* and *The Verge* all likened the show to *The Wire*. In her review for *The Wrap*, critic Mekeisha Madden Toby (2015) even likens *Narco's* character Steven Murphy to *The Wire's* Jimmy McNulty.

While critics like Matthew Gilbert (2015) of *The Boston Globe* are right to point out the "very 'Wire'-like – truth at its core," they are missing the bigger picture. The "'Goodfellas' vibe" that *Variety* Critic Brain Lowry (2015) points out is also worth discussing, particularly since both the film and the show use heavy voiceover work by their protagonists. Indeed, it makes sense that producer José Padilha and star Wagner Moura would also emphasize the show's connection to a Martin Scorsese film considering the need to legitimize television as worthy works of art in the post-network era.[12] While it might seem pertinent to compare it to other post-network era dramas that deal with drugs, gang violence and masculinity, I think those comparisons undermine the significance of the construction of Latinos in *Narcos* and its relation to a war on drugs rhetoric that has dogged Latino characters throughout much of television history. By comparing the show to *The Wire* or *Goodfellas*, reviewers and television influencers have

[12] In *Legitimating Television*, Michael Newman and Elana Levine (2012) explore how politics of taste are producing and recreating dominant social structures in contemporary television

failed to recognize the Latino element of the series, which is significant considering that roles available for Latino actors in Hollywood are often limited to criminal narratives.

It is not a coincidence that the rare critic who did compare *Narcos* to *Miami Vice*, warned fans that they would not like Netflix's show. Kwame Opem (2015) of *The Verge* writes, "Much of the dialogue is subtitled in Spanish, making Colombia and its people the focus of the story. It's a refreshing move for Netflix, though it may put off old-school *Miami Vice* fans who expect their gangsters to speak in Spanish-accented English." In other words, the inclusion of more realistic, fully developed Latino characters should be enough to scare off certain segments of the population who believe the Latino Threat Narrative is universal truth. Critics are not able put to the show in context with a series like *Miami Vice* because the Latino characters in those programs are nothing like the ones in *Narcos*. On *Miami Vice*, Stratton argues:

> The show presents a very racially conservative diegetic America…The show offers white Americans a safe and reassuring world continuing to be dominated by white Americans with other racialized groups occupying their established and traditional places in the American race hierarchy (211).

In *Narcos*, despite narration from white character, Agent Murphy, there is no "safe and reassuring" world dominated by white Americans. First, Escobar consistently outsmarts the American DEA agents and Colombian government, leaving scarce moments of catharsis for our supposed "heroes." Second, there is a lack of an "American race hierarchy" in the show. Indeed, as noted above Colombian government officials put Americans in their place on several occasions by lambasting their motives for capturing

Escobar and questioning their lack of dedication to combatting the war on drugs on their own home front, American soil. Finally, Agent Murphy's air of racial superiority is increasingly used to characterize him as an unlikable villain in Colombia's war on drugs. This is particularly effective when he calls Polaroids of dead Medillin Cartel members and innocent civilians his "accomplishments," or in the scene I have discussed previously when he shows no compassion or tolerance for rear-ending a taxi.

Likewise the only critic listed on Rotten Tomatoes' *Narcos* page to compare the show to other recent dramas with a heavily Latina/o cast, like *The Bridge,* was *Grantland's* Andy Greenwald (2015), who writes, "I appreciate how, not unlike *The Bridge*, Narcos allows its Colombian characters to speak entirely in subtitled Spanish. These little details and considerations add up over time." Again, *The Bridge*, which aired on FX and told the story of a dead body found on the borderline of the US and Mexico was seen as a ratings failure.[13] So why compare it to *Narcos*? Looking at the production and representation in both programs can lead the industry to see what can be done to ensure more complex Latino representations. For example, as Greenwald implies, Spanish language is extremely important to the world-building of these series, not only to make them seem more realistic, but to allow these programs to be fully realized crime drama narratives come to life.

Discussion:

Netflix & Narcos

[13] Ng, Philiana. "FX Cancels 'The Bridge' After Two Seasons." *The Hollywood Reporter*. 21 October 2014. Web. 14 May 2016.

Considering the type of network distributing *Narcos*, we must recognize that Netflix is: a) a subscription based broadband-delivered video service (BDVS) and b) not a producer, but rather curator of episodic content. Indeed, *Narcos* is financed and produced by two companies, Dynamo and Gaumont International Television (IMBD). As discussed in my introduction, Dynamo is a Colombia based audiovisual production company founded in 2006. Their website celebrates the company as the market leader for foreign producers filming in Colombia. Gaumont International Television is the American division of the French company, Gaumont and frequent partner of Netflix.

Debuting in the fall of 2015, *Narcos* came at a time when Netflix had already established a heavy presence in Latin America. Since its launch in the region, the company has garnered over five million new subscribers. Consequently, when *Narcos* was first announced in 2014, trade publications were quick to characterize it as a bid to create content that would appeal to Spanish speaking viewers in Latin America. Writing for *Variety*, Anna Marie Del Fuente (2015) reported how both *Narcos* and the Spanish language soccer team satire *Club de Cuervos* (2015-Present) are just two examples of content that would be attractive to the region. Multiple members of Netflix's communication team have, however, been clear that *Narcos* is not just for Latin America; it is for the world (Del Fuente 2015; Hopewell 2015). The press conceptualized *Narcos* as a truly international collaboration and a part of Netflix's plan for what has been characterized as "world domination" (Murgia 2016; Roxborough 2016).

Further, *Narcos* presents an interesting case of international collaboration. American screenwriter Chris Brancato served as showrunner for the first season, while fellow American scribes Carlo Bernard and Doug Miro are also credited as creators of the

series. Brazilian director José Padilha is credited as an executive producer and directed the first two episodes of season one. His reported muse, Brazilian actor Wagner Moura, plays Pablo Escobar in the program. American Eric Newman is also credited as an executive producer. Mexican cinematographer Guillermo Navarro and Colombian director Andi Baiz also directed episodes of the first season. In addition to Brazilian Moura, the main cast includes American, Chilean, Colombian, Brazilian and Mexican actors and actresses. The various ethnicities involved in the creation of the show give Netflix clout when it describes the show as "international."[14] Netflix's imagining of *Narcos* as appealing to an international audience truly makes it phenomenal in a sense that other American distributors may not be capable of. As Mary McNamara (2015) of *The Los Angeles Times* writes, "Taking full and admirable advantage of Netflix's signature freedom from traditional convention, the writers and director combine the historical footage of a docudrama with the sub-titled Spanish of an art film, the viciousness of premium cable with a the easy-read political analysis of a bestseller." In other words, the Netflix model allows the show to partake in unconventional production values.

Narcos & Ideological Negotiation

As Lotz reminds us, "The ability for like to speak only to like is one of the greatest consequences of narrowcast media because it decreases the probability of incongruity and disables the type of negotiation theorized to be central to the ability of network-era television to operate as a cultural forum" (44). Phenomenal television, however, can operate as a place of ideological negotiation because it catches the viewer

[14] For a full cast and crew listing please see Narcos IMDB page here: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2707408/

off guard by delivering non-dominant messages. *Narcos*, for example, forces the viewer to reconsider their opinion of Escobar when he is kicked out of the Colombian Congressional Hall. As *Collider* TV Critic Chris Cabin (2015) puts it, "the show exudes sympathy for Escobar…the series' depiction of him as a radical figure of nationalism is both refreshing and engrossing."

Other critics have also praised the way the show indicts the U.S.'s War on Drugs and in doing so disrupts the notion of a Latino Threat Narrative. Jeremy Egner (2015) of *The New York Times* writes, "It implicates traffickers like Escobar…but also an American drug policy that declared 'war' on suppliers without doing much to address the demand." In a piece for *Slate*, Diana Martinez (2015) writes:

> Unlike most American movies about the drug trade, it [*Narcos*] manages to glamorize its protagonists while still revealing the devastating structural problems they are working within. It understands a key dynamic in our real drug wars: the way drug lords and the cops and the DEA agents are all involved in the project of creating and fortifying the powerful myths around them, and they will do whatever it takes to secure their legacy. In the show, the DEA, as well as Escobar, are shown bowing to economic pressures and making unwanted compromises with government officials, all the while fancying themselves heroes and vigilantes.

In other words, *Narcos*' realistic take on this world separates it from not only previous takes on Escobar, but also all American takes on the subject matter. This story operates in a structurally complex world that goes beyond "good" and "bad" and goes beyond the simplification of the Latino Threat Narrative. Hall argues that ideologies are transformed

by "breaking the chain in which they are currently fixed and establishing a new articulation" (90). I am arguing that *Narcos* is successful in countering several of the more damaging past elements of the Latino drug runner stereotype. Further, its inclusion of confident and authoritative Latin American government officials invoke a more nuanced Latino Threat Narrative than portrayed in other media.

The production values of the show allow it to do so. The fact that it was shot in Colombia is one of *Narcos'* biggest assets. As *Slates*' Juliana Jiménez Jaramillo (2015) writes, "At least the series was actually shot in Colombia, which, for Hollywood, is already a huge step forward toward more faithful depictions of Latin America." Exhaustive research too, contributes to a more progressive representation of Escobar and Colombia. Executive Producer Eric Newman says the research allowed the crew to "really embrace the Colombian contribution to bringing down Escobar. They did incredibly brave things and died at an alarming rate" (Sage 2016). In addition, both Padilha and Brancato have referenced meeting with former Colombian President César Gaviria, whose character plays a large role in the second half of the first season. In an interview with *Creative Screenwriting Magazine*, Brancato recalls interviews with journalists, military men, cops, narcos and lawyers, all to ensure that the story was told properly. While fictional, the screenwriter clearly communicates how he aspired to tell a narrative that was as accurate as possible. Padilha, on the other hand, sees *Narcos* as important to exposing the origins of drug distribution. He sees telling the story as contributing to awareness of a "social issue, a health problem" (Ashbrook 2015). By relating his series to having a greater purpose of exposing drugs as a global health and economic issue, Padilha is declaring the social significance of *Narcos*.

Conclusion: The Limitations of *Narcos*

I have established that Netflix's *Narcos* nuances the Latino Threat Narrative by featuring a humanizing and complex portrayal of notorious Medillín Cartel leader Pablo Escobar. Despite the violence he coordinates and commits onscreen, the series also depicts his cunning, intelligence and roots as a man who was born in the slums and given no special treatment afforded to those in the ruling classes of Colombia, yet still becomes a man of great power and influence. In addition to Escobar, several members of the Colombian government are given great agency and portrayed as bold leaders unafraid to stand up to the corruption caused by the illegal drug economics in Colombia, even if it means sacrificing their own lives. These men further fight back against imperialist U.S. policies and question whether the Americans in the series care about the tragic number of innocent Colombian casualties or just want Escobar dead for public relations motives. *Narcos* breaks crime genre conventions by giving its American protagonists scarce moments of victory and by including the aforementioned fully realized Latino characters. Production elements, such as shooting on site in Colombia allow the series to give its audience an immersive television viewing experience. Both Bogotá and Medillín feel like characters in the show.

Alas, despite progress being made in the representation of Latina/os, *Narcos* does not go as far as it possibly could in ensuring a critical look at the war on drugs in Colombia. As Steven Cohen (2016) suggests in *New Republic*, it would be harder to fault the show for its lack of a truly subversive critical look at illegal narcotics trafficking, if as noted above, series executives Brancato, Padilha and Newman did not stress the social significance of their work to the extent they have. Part of the issue is that *Narcos* remains

framed from the perspective of white DEA Agent Steve Murphy. His voice is the first you hear in episode one and the last heard at the end of the season finale, "Despegue." Indeed, much of his narration is unnecessary and could be considered condescending or jingoistic. As he so astutely proclaims in "La Gran Mentira," "Bad guys don't play by the rules, that's what makes them bad…There's one thing I've learned down here in Colombia, good and bad are relative concepts." Stratton argues that in *Miami Vice* the U.S. "was constructed as the world of law and the world beyond America's borders was constructed as the world of lawlessness" (214). While *Narcos* goes beyond *Vice's* simplification to implicate the U.S. in having its own interests and motives behind interfering in Colombian politics, dialogue like Murphy's, which establishes the lack of rules and proper authority in Colombia, contradicts any critique the writers are trying to make of American policy in the Latino drug war. You cannot easily hold the U.S. accountable for poor domestic and foreign drug policy while also reinforcing the global south as a wild and corrupt place. Cohen posits that it could be argued that Murphy's character is himself a critique of American thought at that moment in time, but I would argue that message could potentially be lost on a general audience.

Of course, when you have a show that is aiming to be well received by multiple audiences around the world, not every aspect of the show will live up to each audience's expectations. Netflix's Chief Product Officer commented to *The Wall Street Journal* that the company is particularly "interested in local content that can find an audience in a broader global membership base. 'Narcos,' a French production shot in Colombia with a Brazilian star, played well all over the world" (Ramachandran 2016). In other words, local and regional content that could have global appeal is what Netflix looks for when

looking for programming content. *Narcos* presents a common issue with this philosophy; the international elements are overshadowed by the simple fact that the show's creators Chris Brancato, Carlo Bernard and Doug Miro, are all Los Angeles-based Hollywood screenwriters. Brancato served as showrunner for the first season. When he departed, Netflix and Gaumont brought in fellow American Adam Fierro, who previously had worked on *The Shield* (2002-2008) and *Resurrection Boulevard* (2000-2002).[15] Fierro left before season two premiered in September 2016, leaving American Eric Newman and Brazilian José Padilha to take over showrunner duties (Andreeva 2015). With the majority of the showrunners and executive producers coming from the Hollywood system, it only makes sense that *Narcos* would have a skewed perspective. This may be unintentional, but it is still a fact. Another example of potentially inadvertent bias is the fact that both Brancato and Padilha stressed how important it was for them to interview and gather information from the Colombians who lived through the events portrayed onscreen. In my research, I have been unable to confirm whether any Colombians from the Escobar era have served or been offered consultant positions for the program. On other hand, the real life Steven Murphy and Javier Peña have been reported to serve as consultants on the program, giving it another American flair. The duo even headlined a documentary on Escobar after *Narcos* found popularity (Suarez Sang 2016).

The reception of *Narcos* in Colombia is another issue. *The Guardian* reported, "Colombian audiences have been irritated and amused by the show's hodgepodge of accents" (Brodzinsky 2015). Indeed, they note that Moura speaks with a distinctive Brazilian-Spanish accent that sounds nothing like Escobar's real life Paisas accent. The "hodgepodge of accents" is an example of PanLatino casting, but it also points to the

[15] Fierro does identify as a Latino and was nominated for an ALMA Award for his writing on *The Shield*.

concept that by hiring a diverse set of Latina/o actors, the intention may be to build a cast that will appeal to an international audience. Hence, Netflix's assertion that it is creating the first global television network (Murgia 2016). Essentially, while I have argued that *Narcos* is a positive step forward in the representation of Latinos in television that breaks down elements of the omnipresent Latino Threat Narrative in American media, the show has its limitations, chief amongst them a continuous inclination to resort to U.S. perspectives that restricts its ability to take a critical look at the war on the illegal drug trade unlike anything we have seen before.

Chapter 3: Jane the Latina Rule Breaker

The dramedy *Jane the Virgin* (2014-Present) tells the story of a 23-year Latina virgin who is accidentally artificially inseminated. Even showrunner, the non-Latina Jennie Urman, found the premise slightly absurd when it was first pitched to her. She told media industry trade publication *Deadline* that her first thoughts were, "I'm going to pass on that project. It sounds too crazy" (Andreeva 2015). Ultimately, Urman changed her mind and The CW ordered the series in the spring of 2014. The show is adapted from Venezuelan telenovela *Juana la Virgen* (2002) and stars Puerto Rican actress Gina Rodriguez as the Venezuelan and Mexican American Jane Villanueva, a religious woman and virgin who is inseminated with the sperm of a wealthy Latino hotel owner. She lives with her mother, Xiomara, or Xo for short, who had her at 16, and her widowed abuela, Alba. Set in Miami, the show includes religious and Latina/o cultural themes, as well as commentary on immigration and Latina sexuality. Upon release, the show was a ratings success and catapulted Rodriguez into the spotlight.

In contrast to the previous chapter on *Narcos,* which focused on Latinos and masculine imagery, the goal of this chapter is to contemplate Latina imagery and representation in *Jane and the Virgin* and the industrial repercussions of the show's success. While the male-oriented Latino threat is often tied to criminality and violent masculinity, Chavez notes that the Latina threat is tied to sexuality. He argues that many believe the myth that, "Latina hyper-fertility threatens the nation's demographic future by adding to population growth and changing its ethnic-racial composition" (109). Chavez also defines the "anchor baby," as "a metaphorical term that is meant to capture the

alleged strategy among undocumented immigrants of having a baby who will legally be a U.S. citizen and eventually be able to apply for his or her family's legal residence through the preferences for family reunification" (193). The term, believed to be first used in the 1980s originally referred to "anchoring," or how having children in the U.S. might alter the migration patterns of immigrants. Post 9-11, the term has been used more ominously to argue that the U.S. constitution's promise of citizenship as a birthright should be challenged in the case of the children of undocumented immigrants born on American soil. Chavez notes a particularly dark example of Senator Lindsey Graham using, "an animal metaphor when characterizing undocumented mothers as coming [to the U.S.] 'to drop' a child" (195). In other words, the women are inhuman animals "dropping" a baby like a bird drops an egg, or a cow drops their litter. Chavez argues Graham dismisses immigrant women's humanity and underscores that they "are part of a conspiracy to circumvent the nation's immigration laws" (195).

From a media studies perspective, Latinas, similar to Latinos, have in many cases faced a significant othering. As a reminder, Ramírez Berg has noted three distinct Latina stereotypes in American films. The "harlot," "female clown," and the "dark lady" are all defined by the way they use their hyper-sexuality, or lack there-of, to manipulate and negate WASP norms and ideals. Isabel Molina Guzmán and Angharad Valdivia (2010) have considered more recent trends in racializing Latina bodies, arguing, "the marginalization of Latina bodies is defined by an ideological contradiction – that is, Latina beauty is marked as other, yet it is that otherness that also marks Latinas as desirable" (213). They cite an example of the framing of Jennifer Lopez's body as "animalistic," and "irresistibly dangerous" in the films *Blood and Wine* (1996) and *U-*

Turn (1997) as an example of how the othering of Latinas makes them so appealing to the Anglo American male characters in these films. Likewise, Selma Hayek's character in *Timecode* (2000) follows a similar pattern (Molina Guzman and Valdivia, 213). Essentially, from early Westerns in the 1920s and 30s to more recent characters played by prominent Latina stars Jennifer Lopez and Selma Hayek, there has been a history of representation tied to a "dangerous" and threatening sexuality.

Using textual analysis, this chapter begins with an overview of the representation of Latina/os in *Jane the Virgin.* Focusing on season one episodes "Chapter One," "Chapter Two," "Chapter Three," and "Chapter Eight," "Chapter Ten," I argue that the show gives a voice to immigration reform and Latina feminism, while also portraying a multicultural Miami. Next, by utilizing discourse analysis of published articles, including interviews with producers, writers and actors in trade and popular journalism outlets, I explore how production and social marketing elements of *Jane the Virgin* reinforce themes of multi-generational family bonds, independent womanhood, and Latinidad. Molina Guzman and Valdivia define Latinidad as "the process of being and/or becoming Latina/o" (205). I also consider Esteban del Río's (2016) conviction that Latinidad consists of the political, economic, and cultural ties that bind Latina/os living in the U.S. together (10), to be of significance to this chapter. As I will discuss, *Jane's* inclusion of Latina/o political, economic, and cultural themes evokes a picture of real Latina/o lives, free from resorting to images of aspirational whiteness.

Further, I consider how the show's official Twitter accounts, @CWJaneTheVirgin and @JaneWriters, and the official accounts of show runner Jennie Urman, @JennieUrman, and star Gina Rodriguez, @HereIsGina, promote these discourses to

their followers. I establish that the accounts associated with the writers and the show's main Twitter page consistently promote the aspect of a multi-generational family and the strength of love and the bonds between Jane, Xo and Alba. Consequently, these accounts also stress independent womanhood and aspire to lift women up, rather than tear them down. On the other hand, these accounts and Jennie Urman refrain from stressing the Latina/o elements to the program. Instead, they allow star Gina Rodriguez to be the strong voice of Latinidad in regards not only to the show, but in regards to a greater discussion of cultural diversity in television. Ultimately, I argue that the progressive Latina/o representations on the show, free from dominant imagery of threatening Latina sexuality, have given Rodriguez and other key stakeholders a platform to further a discussion of diversity in the media industry, both in terms of Latina/o imagery and the roles offered to and taken by Latina actresses. It remains to still be seen how the success of *Jane*, as well as *Narcos*, contributes to a greater discussion on Latina/o authorship and employment in above the line roles in the U.S. media industry.

Analysis

Formal Elements of an Inclusive Miami in Jane the Virgin

I would like to begin my discussion of the Latina/o representation in *Jane* by first considering some of the more formal elements of the show that lend themselves to the creation of an inclusive multicultural Miami. The majority of the first season's scenes take place at either the Villanueva household or the Marbella Hotel. The Villaneuvas live 8.2 miles from the Marbella, which is located on the popular South Beach of Miami. The pilot episode opens with an unnamed Latino male narrator explaining the origins of "our story." In Jane's sunlit bedroom, her abuela, Alba, is addressing a young Jane on the

significance of losing her virginity. Her daughter and Jane's mother, Xo, sits on Jane's bed painting her nails, as Alba instructs Jane in Spanish to crumple a perfect white flower, to show Jane how once the flower is broken, it can never be pure again. The scene jumps to the present, where Jane is kissing her boyfriend Michael on her bed. She stops them before they go too far. It is implied and later confirmed that Jane has kept her promise to her abuela. Now on her porch, Jane kisses Michael goodbye and the guitar melody of Juanes' "Una Flor" begins to play as she reenters her home to join her abulea and mother on the couch to watch the latest episode of their favorite telenovela, *The Passions of Santos*. The exposition in the first few moments of the pilot is telling for a few reasons. First, the introduction of three multi-generational women protagonists is unique even for a show aimed at a female demographic. Second, the first words spoken by these characters are in Spanish, which initially worried The CW executives, who had never previously aired a program with Spanish dialogue (Sava 2014). Finally, the use of Spanish language and music from Juanes, an international Colombian singer and producer, help introduce a world marked by Latino/a elements.

The next scene jumps to the Marbella. The hotel is an upscale property owned and operated by Rafael Solano, the biological father of Jane's baby. Rafael and his wife Petra are getting ready for a hotel party. It is revealed that he is unhappy in his marriage and considering a divorce. At the party, held on the pool grounds, Rafael's sister, Luisa assures him that getting a divorce does "not make you our father." He is dressed in a white suit with a pastel pink shirt; she wears a white jewel encrusted dress. String lights hang from palm trees providing a warm glow for the event. Jane, a waitress at the hotel, is dressed in a mermaid costume and pouring champagne at the party. The party is a

welcome back for Rafael, who has just beaten cancer. Rafael is also someone with whom Jane had a "magical kiss" years earlier, but he never called her afterwards.

In a later scene, after Jane has learned of her accidental pregnancy and that Rafael is the father, the two recall their first meeting while sitting in a white cabana with turquoise drapes moving along to the breeze. Potted plants with bright pink flowers add to the tropical feeling of the setting. Inside the Marbella, the walls are hues of bright blues and white, with lots of natural light. While scenes take place in other locations, I find it necessary to describe the formal elements of the main two settings because these elements set an aura for the entire series. Urman has noted the significance of the formal aesthetics of the show, "I feel like in so much of TV, there's so much darkness. TV is so dark. This show is going to be a lighter, brighter show, and I wanted to feel that visually…I wanted the hotel to be a place you wanted to go and feel the warmth and the sunlight" (Sava 2014). The art direction, as well as the bright pastels of the costuming and natural brightness of the cinematography, contribute to the show's light feeling and remain a constant throughout the series. While it is unclear what specific programs Urman is referring to as "dark," programs that have perpetuated the Latino threat narrative, such as *Breaking Bad* and *Bloodline,* occasionally contain the dark shadowy aesthetics that *Jane* is a response to. Perhaps more significantly, the brightness and saturated color palate of the show contribute to a feeling of hope and optimism, free from the Latina threat as described by Chavez.

Although the majority of first season takes place in the Villanueva home and Marbella hotel, various season one scenes take place on the bus, at Jane's gynecologist's office, at a Catholic school where Jane gets a job and at the tequila bar where Xo sings a

few times a week. These scenes away from Jane's home and the Marbella allow the showrunner and writers to create their vision of an inclusive Miami. In the pilot, for example, the viewer learns the Xo has always dreamt of being a singer. They see her perform a cover of her favorite artist, Paulina Rubio's "Me Gustas Tanto," to a crowd of white, brown and black faces. Another popular setting for Jane is public transit buses, which she takes to work and to the doctor's office. Noticeably, other Latina/o, white, Black and Asian faces are also seen onboard. This is a pattern found in most scenes with a large number of extras in the first season of *Jane the Virgin*.

In addition to the extras, the main cast consists of a number of actors and actresses of different backgrounds. Their characters are as diverse as the actors playing them. As mentioned above, Gina Rodriguez is Puerto Rican. Andrea Navarro and Ivonne Coll, who play Xo and Alba, are also Puerto Rican, despite playing characters of Venezuelan descent. Mexican actor Jaime Camil plays Mexican soap opera star Rogelio de la Vega, who is also Jane's father. Although I would argue that Rafael Solano and his family are is initially presented as Cuban-American Latinos throughout the entire first season, the audience later learns in season three that his origins are unknown and he was born in Italy.[16] Solano thus becomes more of a post-racial figure, although his potential Italian heritage matches that of the actor who plays him, Justin Baldoni.[17] Finally, Israeli actress Yael Grobglas and Canadian actor Brett Dier round out the main cast. Grobglas plays Petra Solano, who is from the Czech Republic. Dier plays Anglo-American Michael Cordero Jr. Even the recurring characters add to the diversity on screen. Rafael's sister,

[16] Season 3, "Chapter Fifty-One"

[17] Post-racial refers to the common misconception that we live in a world that is post-race, or where racism does not exist and plays no part in structural discrimination. In the case of describing a post-racial character, I am referring to a character who is not defined by his race.

Louisa Alver, for example is a lesbian and depicted as being in an on again/off again relationship with the villainous Rose Solano. Cuban-American actress Yara Martinez plays Louisa. Together the main characters represent a cosmopolitan Miami, where people from diverse backgrounds live together fairly harmoniously, particularly when compared to the depiction of Miami in *Narcos*.

Of course, while the main cast and diverse extras contribute to an overall feeling of a post-racial Miami, the show skews towards a more multicultural perspective, as defined by Gray, through its inclusion of Latina feminism and immigration reform topics in its narrative, as I will expand on in the next two sections.

Latina Feminisms in Jane the Virgin

In the first few episodes of season one, Jane confronts several big decisions. Amongst them is whether or not she should terminate the pregnancy? If she keeps the pregnancy, should she keep the baby? Now that she is pregnant, should she lose her virginity to Michael before they are officially married? Eventually she even grapples with whether or not she should stay with Michael and whether her feelings for Rafael are real or not.

To address these questions, I turn to Gloria González-López's (2003) qualitative research on views of virginity and female sexuality amongst forty female Mexican immigrants with daughters in the Los Angeles area. She found that Catholic teachings have had less of an impact on what they taught their daughters than stereotypes might suggest. As noted in my introduction, Chavez's research points to how the media's perceived notion of Latina/os' "pronatalist cultural values" driven by devout Catholicism have historically colored the discourses of uncontrollable population growth in Mexico,

which in effect has increased the number of undocumented Mexican immigrants in the U.S. (85). González-López's findings, however, contradict dominant ideologies by suggesting that rather than the primary reason why these mothers encourage their daughters to preserve their virginity until marriage, Catholic guilt was an internal element that her interviewees dealt with personally and privately (234). Sexism in a patriarchal Mexican society and the upholding of one's reputation and familial honor, rather, is what drove these women to encourage their daughters to preserve their virginity before marriage (234).[18]

Jane's decision to save herself for marriage is depicted as a conscious decision made through her own personal agency. While her grandmother, as the narrator, instructs the audience that she has two passions in life, "God and Jane, in that order," and sees Jane's decision as a promise to God, Jane, however, sees it as more of a familial promise to her abuela and a promise to herself. She tells Michael in "Chapter Three," "My whole life I didn't want to end up an unmarried pregnant woman like my mom, but guess what? I'm an unmarried pregnant woman like my mom…But, I'm engaged to the man that I love and I'm gonna spend the rest of my life with. I waited for you." She and Michael plan to have sex that night, without telling Jane's abuela. In a comedic twist, Alba insists Jane and Xo go to church with her that evening. The sermon preaches that God will only give one what they can handle as long as they live an honest and pure life. The gospel is meant to make Xo feel guilty for keeping the identity of Jane's father hidden from her. Ironically, it is Jane who feels guilty for not telling her abuela that she plans to have intercourse with Michael that night. Overcome by potentially lying by omission, Jane

[18] While González-López's research is specifically looking at Mexican immigrants in southern California, I mean to use her research as a point of comparison to make my argument that Jane presents more complicated views of religion and sexuality.

confides in her abuela her plans. Caught off guard and angered, Alba tells Jane that she prohibits her from having sex with Michael and warns her of the consequences of breaking her promise to God. Jane replies that she was only informing Alba of her decision and not asking for permission. She acknowledges that situations change and she doubts God will forsake her. While the couple, ultimately, forego having sex that night due to a fire alarm and Jane's budding feelings for Rafael, from this episode we see that Jane's virginity has less to do with religion and more to do with her own moral beliefs and identity. In other words, like the women interviewed in the study above, her views on virginity are less influenced by religion than previous stereotypes may have implied.

On the other hand, unlike what the mothers interviewed by González-López had experienced, a patriarchal society has had limited influence on Jane's decision. Jane grows up in a powerful matriarchal household, in which for neither better nor worse, there has been little male presence. Indeed, patriarchal influences are rejected in her household. In "Chapter Two," she invites Michael to his first family meeting with her abuela and mother. Michael, excited to be there, exclaims that he "is proud to be representing the male point of view," which causes all three women to wince and give him a disdainful look. Jane replies, "that's not gonna do well in our meetings." Later in the episode, Jane reveals to Michael that long before they met, she shared a kiss with Rafael. Angered, Michael demands that Jane quit her job at the Marbella, because it "makes him uncomfortable." While she understands Michael's feelings, she confides in her mother her fears that she will become attached to the baby after hearing its heartbeat in a sonogram. Crying on the porch swing, she asks her mother how she can prepare herself to give the baby away. Xo admits that there is nothing Jane can do to prepare, but

that she "can be selfish now. You don't have to take care of anyone but yourself." Heeding her mother's advice, she tells that Michael that she is going to keep her job saying, "I get to be selfish now, not you." Jane asserts herself and rejects Michael's patriarchal authority in their relationship.

While contemplating terminating the pregnancy, she tells Rafael, "This was not the plan, that I have worked so hard every second, so that my life turned out different than my mothers. I was an accident, and I know my mother loves me, but I also know in some ways I derailed her life. I don't want my kid to feel like that ever." In other words, Jane has had a plan for years. She has been an ambitious and independent young woman. She has worked hard in school for six years to get her teaching degree. She has met someone she wants to spend the rest of her life with, but only wanted to marry after she was professionally and financially stable. Thus, unlike past Latina stereotypes described by Ramírez Berg and Molina Guzman and Valdivia, Jane's sexuality is not the biggest element in defining her character. She has a healthy sexual attitude, while balancing her education and occupational goals.

Jane and #ImmigrationReform

Immigration is another issue taken on by *Jane the Virgin*. In the first season, Jane's abuela is an undocumented immigrant from Venezuela. In a pivotal scene of "Chapter Ten," Alba who has been hospitalized after falling down a flight of stairs lies unconsciously in a hospital bed. The doctor comes in and tells Xo and Rogelio, who are at her side, that her mother will be deported:

> Doctor: Ms. Villanueva, there's no easy way to tell you this.
>
> Xo: Oh no, did the test results…

Doctor: No, no, her condition remains unchanged. Look, the hospital's cracking down.

Xo: On what?

Doctor: Your mother's in this country illegally. She has no insurance and the hospital cannot afford to absorb the cost of her care.

Xo: I don't understand, what does that mean?

Doctor: That when the hurricane lifts, we will have to notify ICE and they will deport her to Venezuela…where she can continue to receive care if she needs.

Xo: What? That can't be legal.

Onscreen dialogue: Yes, this really happens. Look it up.

#ImmigrationReform

Doctor: It's called medical repatriation.

This scene is particularly powerful for its "#ImmigrationReform" call to action. It also brought attention to *Jane the Virgin* and fueled articles in a wide variety of press outlets, including *Variety Latino*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Buzzfeed* (Calvario 2015; Moreno & Planas 2015; Orley 2015). In a piece on immigration reform in *Jane*, *ThinkProgress* reported that "more than 600 undocumented immigrants were sent back to their native country while seeking care in American hospitals between 2008 and 2013" (Goldstein 2015). Like Alba, they could not afford health insurance and did not qualify for public health care. Even some patients with coverage face deportation not by the U.S. government, "but by hospitals seeking to avoid the costs of long-term care" (Goldstein 2015).

Significantly, the decision to include issues of immigration had long been planned by Jennie Urman and the series' writing team. Urman hoped that by "personalizing this issue, and playing it out through beloved characters, we can make the political, personal…and hopefully raise consciousness, and compassion" (Orley 2015). The idea of using medical repatriation as a way to touch on immigration reform, Urman told *Buzzfeed* was found through writer's room research. She notes that it felt like an "organic complication" to the story (Orley 2015).

Immigration reform in *Jane the Virgin*, however, is not just relegated to a "special episode." The issue is a recurring theme throughout the show. In "Chapter Eight," Jane decides to back away from suing Dr. Luisa Alver because the thought of lawyers and going to court makes her abuela nervous. She is worried the lawyers might look into her family's past and discover Alba's secret. In addition, Alba's desire to and the process she goes through to get a green card is a major subplot in season two. *Jane the Virgin,* generally is subversive in its views on immigration policy in the U.S. As I'll discuss in the next section, the strong familial bonds between the Villanueva women represent the types of families that are not protected under current policies. If nothing else, by including Alba's fear of deportation, *Jane* is giving a face to and bringing awareness to an audience that may be unfamiliar with this phenomenon facing immigrant families in the U.S.

Multigenerational Family

As previously discussed, imagery of a multi-generational matriarchal family is dominant in *Jane the Virgin's* narrative from the opening scene of the pilot. One of the greatest patterns found throughout press for the show is praise for the multigenerational

familial story at the center of the show. Throughout the first season, a number of articles by television critics and influencers took note of the show's powerful images of a matriarchal family and the bonds of love that connect them. As Libby Hill (2015), a writer for the *A.V. Club,* succinctly put it: "There is a love story at the center of *Jane the Virgin*, but it doesn't beat in the heart of a handsome prince. It exists wholly within the confines of three women committed to the most fantastical ideal of all: unconditional love."

Further, in a story retweeted by Urman on Mother's Day 2015,[19] Hill (2015) also considers how the show, "presents a powerful image of modern matriarchy throughout its first season…Each of the women represents a different face of single motherhood, though not always in the most traditional interpretation." Hill goes on to describe how Alba is a widower who was forced to raise her daughter mostly on her own. She is the most traditional, but open and supportive of Jane's and Xo's "unconventional choices." Hill notes how Xo was forced to be an adult at age 16, a sudden transition that did not allow her to grow into adulthood. Finally, she describes Jane as a "product…of these two remarkable women." Together they represent shifting generational "ideas on single motherhood through recent history." Hill's analysis is important because not only does it speak to greater ideologies within the cultural artifact, the show, itself, but it also points out a discourse that is apparent throughout the tweets of the writers room, Jennie Urman, and Gina Rodriguez. For example, on December 15, 2014 the @JaneWriters remarked how mother daughter scenes "bring such magic to our show!"[20] The bonds of

[19] JennieUrman (@JennieUrman). "Love!! RT @midwestspitfire: In honor of Mother's Day, I wrote about the best moms on TV #JaneTheVirgin." 10 May 2015 3:57 PM. Tweet.

[20] JaneTheVirginWriters (@JaneWriters). "These mother daughter scenes bring such magic to our show! @HereIsGina @AndreaNavedo #Gorgeous." 15 December 2014, 6:27 PM. Tweet.

motherhood were celebrated outside of the fictional story of the show as well. Gina Rodriguez tweeted a Happy Mother's Day to both her onscreen mother and Jennie Urman.

These images of a strong matriarchal and multi-generational family are significant because they negate one of the key elements of the Latino Threat Narrative as described by Chavez, that Latina women exist solely with the purpose to serve the men in their lives. In "Chapter Eight," Abuela tells a young Jane the story of why she and her grandfather came to the U.S. from Venezuela. To free himself from family turmoil, Alba's husband gave up his piece of their family's fortune to bring Alba to the U.S. to start a better life. She tells Jane that giving up money like it's nothing is true love. Indeed, unlike the anchor baby myth, Alba and her husband did not intend to start a family in the States to outsmart immigration laws. They simply wanted a better life.

Finally, in addition to matriarchal family and motherhood, Jennie Urman on Twitter and in press interviews, Gina Rodriguez and the writers' Twitter accounts all build discourses of the importance of telling stories about women. In an interview with *Variety* published ahead of the first season finale of The CW's *Jane the Virgin,* Urman told the reporter, "I'm very conscious that I want to write smart, driven women. That's something that I always try to put into my work. I have a daughter and I have a son, and I want them both to be seeing those kinds of characters on screen" (Kelley, 2015). In addition to women's stories, women lifting each other up were another common pattern in the discourse I found on Twitter. After the announcement of the 2015 Golden Globe nominations for example, @JaneWriters tweeted their support for Urman: "Go

@JennieUrman!!! Go female showrunners!!!!"[21] Although I will go into greater detail about Latinidad and diversity in the social media and press discourses surrounding *Jane the Virgin* in the next section, I do want to note examples of the pattern of Latinas supporting other Latinas that was prominent in Rodriguez's twitter posts. Prior to the season one premiere, she posted a photo of flowers she received from Eva Longoria.[22] Rodriquez also retweeted support and congratulations for the broadcast of the first episode from America Ferrera. Both actresses would also later congratulate Rodriguez on her Golden Globe win. She retweeted the support of both women. This is an example of what Anne Helen Petersen (2009) has discussed as Twitter's ability to construct an "existence of a 'celebrity club' (the idea that all stars are friends and hang out)" (2009). The women's collective support of each other online establishes an image of real life friendship, thus contributing to the construction of an authentic and relatable star text.

Gina Rodriguez fights the Latino Threat in the Media Industry

As I have already discussed, Gina Rodriguez is largely the voice of Latinidad in the discourses surrounding *Jane the Virgin*. Rodriguez has used the show and her subsequent overnight stardom as a platform to call for increased diversity in the television industry and Hollywood in general. She has used award acceptance speeches, television conferences and festivals, talk show appearances, and magazine covers, in addition to Twitter to continue this conversation. A whole study could be conducted simply on Rodriguez and her stardom. For the purposes of this chapter, I briefly take a closer look at her press in the lead up to *Jane*'s October 2014 debut on the CW, her 2015

[21] JaneTheVirginWriters (@JaneWriters). "Go @JennieUrman!!! Go Female Showrunners!!!!" 11 December 2014, 3:15 PM. Tweet.

[22] Rodriguez, Gina (@HereIsGina). "Came home to a bouquet of happiness and support by the beautiful @EvaLongoria thank you doesn't even come close!" 25 September 2014, 4:08 PM. Tweet.

Golden Globes Acceptance Speech and her participation in a panel at the 2015 Paley Fest.

In the summer before the fall debut of *Jane*, outlets like *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Hitfix* and *LatinHeat* were quick to label star Gina Rodriguez as Hollywood's next "It Girl" (Amin 2014; Berkshire 2014; THR Staff 2014). In particular, she gave a headline-making speech at the Television Critics Association Summer Press Tour in July 2014. When addressing a question of why she chose to do *Jane*, rather than accepting an offer to play a lead in ABC's soapy drama *Devious Maids* (2013-2016), Rodriguez remarked that she felt the role in *Maids* was too limiting. She told the press that she became an actress to:

> Change the way I grew up. The way I grew up, I never saw myself on screen. I have two older sisters. One's an investment banker. The other one is a doctor, and I never saw us being played as investment bankers. And I realized how limiting that was for me. I would look at the screen and think, 'Well, there's no way I can do it, because I'm not there.' And it's like as soon as you follow your dreams, you give other people allowance to follow theirs…I wasn't going to let my introduction to the world be one of a story that I think has been told many times. I wanted it to be a story that was going to liberate young girls (Wieselman 2014).

What is consequential about the way Rodriguez presented her decision to critics at this particular press tour is that before the show had even aired she marked it as having social importance. Further, she singled out her power and responsibility as the lead actress of a broadcast network show to be a role model for Latina girls, who may not accustomed to

seeing themselves in roles that are not stereotypical, like maids or landscape workers. The occasion of Rodriguez's speech is also significant. At TCA's press tour she had an audience of hundreds of journalists who would spread her message. Indeed, coverage of her answer appeared in *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Deadline*, *Buzzfeed* and several other outlets (de Moraes 2014; O'Connell 2014; Wieselman 2014).

Being nominated for Best Actress at the Golden Globes gave Rodriguez another outlet to voice her support for greater diversity in the television industry. Successful ratings and awards recognition kept the show and Rodriguez herself an in-demand interviewee through the Globes and beyond. As always, Rodriquez's message in interviews was the social significance of young Latinas and other children of color being able to see themselves represented onscreen in substantial roles. In an interview with *Modern Luxury Miami*, she states, "How do I make change with my art that's going to be substantial? How do I, as Latina, female and single in the industry, change the social norms that restricted me as a kid? I want to play roles that I see in my reality…I want to see Latinas play roles that are empowering, that are strong, that break the norm" (Fuhrman 2015). Again, a theme of playing strong women and Latina women who reflect real life norms of Latinidad in America is expressed as being important to Rodriguez. Perhaps most importantly, the scope of outlets spreading the actress's message of the need for more strong female and strong Latina roles in television was vast. Outlets as diverse as *Modern Luxury Miami*, *Chicago Magazine, Buzzfeed,* and *The Los Angeles Times* all carried stories with or featuring Rodriguez after her Golden Globe nomination (Furhman 2015; Obaro 2014; Villarreal 2014; Wieselman 2014).

At this point in the season, regardless of a win or not, popular journalism and trade press had found interest in Rodriguez's call for improving diversity in the television industry. Winning the 2015 Golden Globe for Best Actress – Television Series Musical or Comedy, only gave her an even bigger platform for her voice to be heard. During her acceptance speech, Rodriguez told the audience, "This award is so much more than myself. It represents a culture that wants to see themselves as heroes" (2015 Golden Globes Broadcast, NBC). Indeed, Rodriguez's rhetoric became a highlight of the awards ceremony. Various outlets, including *ABC News,* called her speech one of the night's top moments (Rothman and Messer 2015). Outlets like *The Huffington Post* were also quick to point out the significance of Rodriguez's win for playing a relatable character: "Good roles for Latinas in Hollywood are still in very short supply; we're seldom the leads of TV shows; noticeably absent at most awards shows and when Latinas are depicted on the small (and big) screen, it's often as the 'exotic best friend' or something one-dimensional or stereotypical" (Rodriquez cited in Hernandez 2015).

In her Q&A after the Globes win, Rodriguez continued to emphasize the social importance of her win: "First and Foremost, the nomination alone was a win for me because it allowed our culture, it allowed Latinos to see themselves in a beautiful light…We are dealing with a society that is so diverse, so beautiful and so human. We need to remember that we have the same stories, and see it as such" (Smith 2015). What is so significant about her rhetoric here is the amount of inclusive language Rodriguez uses. Rather than speaking to "my culture," she speaks to "our culture," the culture of Latina/os. Speaking of greater issues regarding diversity, Rodriguez is quick to describe

the "same stories" facing people of all races and identities, therefore invalidating a myth of racial competition.

Finally, Gina Rodriguez used a 2015 Paley Fest panel on *Jane the Virgin* to make a call to the greater Latina/o community in the U.S. to come together in the fight for more diversity in television. She acknowledged that the American media industry has put all Latinos under a single umbrella:

> They see us as one community and we need to be one community, because we all share the same struggle. That's what we do as human beings – we celebrate each other, we celebrate each other's culture, we celebrate each other's religion, but we also unite as human beings. Let's do that, let's use our power as women, as Latinos, as whatever subculture you identify with, and at the same time celebrate being human. That's what [Jennie] did, she wrote a story for a human (Warner 2015).

Rodriguez's calls for inclusivity follow her pattern of creating a discussion around greater diversity in the television industry. What we see throughout the promotion for the first season of *Jane the Virgin* is Gina Rodriguez's consistent, but slowly evolving message and call to action for greater opportunities for Latinas and other minorities.

For their 2015 Emmy campaign, The CW utilized an ad of Gina Rodriguez sitting in a chair in front of a chalkboard of quotes. Significantly, the quotes were not the words uttered by her character, Jane. Rather they were direct quotes from Rodriguez given at the 2014 TCA Press Tour the summer before *Jane* premiered, from her 2015 Golden Globes speech, and from other published interviews. Each quote, many of which are referenced in my analysis above, point to the social importance of *Jane the Virgin* and the show's

success in creating a dialogue about diversity in television. I am arguing that, in some ways and especially as evidenced in this ad, The CW and other stakeholders of the show let the stardom of Gina Rodriguez eclipse the actual content of program in order to better further this message. Of course, The CW stood to gain from the show and its star being nominated for an Emmy. It is also important to remember that the For Your Consideration ad was meant for Emmy voters and not the general public. That being said, Rodriguez did tweet it out to her millions of followers.[23] While Rodriguez's stardom, arguably, has outgrown *Jane*, the show's ability to be a platform for Latina/o issues such as Latina sexuality and immigration reform has influenced the press discourses and given Rodriguez and other stakeholders credibility when calling for more diversity in the television industry.

Discussion

Latina/os and the Media Industry

I have established that *Jane the Virgin* succeeds in telling a narrative free from notions of a Latina/o threat. Jane Villanueva is a strong, independent Latina that is defined by a combination of her education aspirations, professional goals, and sexuality. She is not defined by a deviant sexuality that has plagued Latina characters since the dawn of the moving image. In addition, a matriarchal multi-generational Latina family at the center of the show broke norms of storytelling on The CW. Of course diversity onscreen is different from diversity behind the screen. The first season of *Jane the Virgin* did employ a number of Latina/o directors and writers. Latina/o directors Edward Ornelas

[23] Rodriguez, Gina (@HereIsGina). "So humbled. No words. Thank you @CBSTVStudios and @TheCWnetwork for believing in me!" 28 May 2015, 3:39 PM. Tweet.

and Zetna Fuentes each directed two episodes. Amongst the writing credits, Emmy Lou Diaz, Carolina Rivera and Christopher Oscar Peña were credited as writing or co-writing five episodes in the first season. Indeed, in an interview with the National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC), Diaz noted how the *Jane's* writer's room included people "of Honduran, Mexican and Colombian descent. While there are some cultural similarities between us, these are three very different backgrounds from which to draw story" (Pacheco 2014). Diaz's position as a writer for *Jane* is also remarkable because she participated in the NHMC's Writers Program, which is credited with staffing 25% of its program's graduates at the big five broadcast networks and cable channels such as BET, VH1 and NUVOtv.[24] Tellingly, Diaz is an example of the potential successes of such programs, even though there is still room to grow.

While writer's rooms are becoming more diverse, more influential positions have yet to see such a change. As previously noted, *Jane's* showrunner is non-Latina Jennie Urman. When asked what it is like to write the story of a Latina, without having that cultural heritage, Urman detailed how she writes "for men all day everyday. The male point of view is a lot harder for me to access then a type A, driven Latina woman with a complicated relationship with her mom. That I get. I understand that" (Kelley 2015). She goes on to describe how she is writing a very specific woman, not the entire Latina culture, which eases the burden of representation. As noted, it probably helps that she does have the perspectives of a range of Latina/os in her writers' room, as well as the perspectives of her diverse cast. Still the question could be asked, would the show look any different with a Latina showrunner instead of Urman?

[24] http://www.nhmc.org/writersprogram

As Negrón-Mutaner reminds us, "producers and executives tend to hire people whom they know, people who are recommended by acquaintances, and/or people with whom they feel comfortable" (111). Urman has had a long career of serving as a producer for shows aimed at the female demographic, including *Gilmore Girls* (2000-2007) and *Lipstick Jungle* (2008-2009). Prior to *Jane* she produced both *90210* (2008-2013) and *Emily Owens M.D.* (2012-2013) for The CW. For that reason it makes sense that she would be given the show. As she notes, "I loved my last show [*Emily Owen, M.D.*], but I felt like I made a lot of safe choices on it. So I had that in my mind – that I wanted to do something very different" (Sava 2014). Although she initially hesitated to do *Jane*, Urman notes how she "started to think about who this girl was who is 23, who hasn't had sex, and that started me thinking about the person her mom was, and her grandmother, and it started to come together as this intergenerational story." Although it is publicly unknown if other people contented to be showrunner of *Jane*, we do know from Urman's interviews that executive producer Ben Silverman approached her to do the project (Sava 2014). Further, regardless of race, the multigenerational family at the center of the show encouraged her to accept the offer. Ultimately, it was most likely Urman's veteran status as a producer of a number of shows, including two for The CW that landed her the gig. Her prior experience with the network may have made her a "comfortable" choice.

Throughout this chapter, I have detailed a pattern of complex and progressive Latina representation in *Jane the Virgin*, as well as the discourses surrounding the show in press coverage. In addition, I have considered how the program has given Gina Rodriguez a platform to advocate for more diverse roles for Latinas in television. It has been two years since her Golden Globes win increased her visibility and message.

Notably, both Eva Longoria and America Ferrera returned to broadcast television in the season after *Jane the Virgin* premiered. Longoria produced and starred in sitcom *Telenovela* (2015-2016), which was canceled after one season of 11 episodes. Ferrera is a producer and part of an ensemble cast of the comedy *Superstore* (2015-present), currently in its second season. Even more consequential, both had producing credits for these NBC shows. Rodriguez also has seen greater film opportunities in the past few years. In September 2016, she costarred in director Peter Bergs's *Deepwater Horizon* (2016). She next costars with Natalie Portman, Tessa Thompson and Oscar Isaac in *Annihilation* (2017) by indie director Alex Garland whose last film, *Ex-Machina* (2015) garnered several Academy Award nominations.

This is significant. As Negrón-Mutaner notes, the U.S. media industry is largely perceived by producers and executives as a "family business or a business based on relationships," which in turn, "tends to conceal a greater anxiety experienced by people already working in the industry: fear of displacement and change" (112). Latina/os hoping to tell their own narratives in Hollywood films and television face the obstacle of this displacement threat. While the success of Longoria and Ferrera is heartening, the truth is both are Hollywood veterans who had their mainstream breakthroughs over ten years ago. Meanwhile, content for Latina/os is rarely created to introduce new actors to the mainstream. Further, only an established Latina star, such as Jennifer Lopez, may have the ability to get content green lit. NBC's *Shades of Blue* (2015-present) was ordered directly to series after Lopez committed to the program (Rose and Golberg 2014).

Conclusion

My research contributes to the field of Latina/o media studies by looking beyond simply representation in the program itself to illuminate these industrial dynamics. My intention has been to look at how representation can be studied at not only the level of the cultural text, but also in production practices, and discourses constructed by key *Jane the Virgin* stakeholders, including The CW, show runner Jennie Urman, the *Jane* writer's room, star Gina Rodriguez, and the press. I have found that different stakeholders utilize their unique voices to put forth specific discourses. In addition, I have considered how Gina Rodriguez has utilized an ecosystem of star texts[25] to construct her image and spread messages about diversity in the U.S. media industry, the roles for Latinas in television and empowering young girls to dream. Beltrán, Molina Guzman and Valdivia have noted how Jennifer Lopez's rise to stardom brought great reference to her physical attributes.[26] Rodriguez, in contrast, has been able to grow her profile through her media advocacy and philanthropic work, rather than solely a focus on her body.[27] When accepting the young humanitarian award at *Variety's* Unite4:Humanity in February 2016, a teary eyed Rodriguez asked the audience, "What if we lived in a world where booking a show and getting a Golden Globe was just an excuse to do good for others? Confession –

---

[25] Elizabeth Ellcessor (2012) has introduced the term, "star text of connection," to describe a text that "is formed through the creation of social media connections to other people, projects, and audiences" (47). She notes, "performances, promotional appearances, interviews, posed and candid photographs, and gossip publications all contribute to the discursive construction of the star. Thus the transmedia story of the star is formed through repeated connections between these discursive sites" (48). In other words, the interviews, television press tour appearances, red carpet appearances, magazine covers etc. all contribute to the construction of the image of *Jane the Virgin* star Gina Rodriguez. Rodriguez's Instagram, Twitter and Facebook repeatedly connect these sites. Her 2015 *Latina Magazine* cover exists not only within the pages of the magazine itself in print and digital forms, but it also exists on Rodriguez's Instagram account and is further repeated when she tweets the link out to her followers. As Ellcessor argues, we are no longer looking at singular sites of star construction, but rather an ecosystem of texts (66).

[26] In *Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes*, Beltrán (2009) notes Jennifer Lopez's "crossover" into mainstream stardom coincided with a public obsession with her hourglass figure that still exists today. Similarly, Molina Guzmán and Valdivia bring attention to the "sexual excessiveness" in press coverage of Lopez (212).

[27] Rodriguez has been outspoken about loving her curves and changing the perception that you need to be a size 0 in Hollywood. See Buxton 2015, Wiselman 2014.

that's the world I'm trying to create" (Rodriguez 2016). Rodriguez was awarded the honor for her fight to create greater opportunities for minorities in the U.S. Not only does her show *Jane the Virgin* transcend the Latino Threat Narrative, but off-screen Rodriguez has become a beacon of hope for Latina/os and other people of color in the industry.

In my conclusion, I more fully compare and contrast the strategies used by both Netflix's *Narcos* and The CW's *Jane the Virgin*, in terms of how they are presenting themselves as progressive, phenomenal and socially important programming. For example, I have already argued that *Narcos* has taken advantage of the freedom that comes from being distributed by Netflix and having a greater budget. *Jane*, on the other hand, has used social media and the charisma of its star to create a discussion about diversity in the media industry. As I will further discuss in my conclusion, both strategies are advancing Latina/o representation in American television.

Conclusion

Through my textual analysis of Netflix's *Narcos* and The CW's *Jane the Virgin* I have found a pattern of progressive Latina/o representation that either nuances or situates its world and characters outside of the Latino Threat Narrative. Despite some reliance on past Latino stereotypes, *Narcos* utilizes a complex portrayal of Medellin drug cartel leader Pablo Escobar to establish two sides to previous threat narratives. Escobar is presented as an antagonist capable of committing mass atrocities. At the same time, his back story is explored, giving the viewer a sympathetic portrait of a man who has beaten impossible odds emerging from the slums to become someone with great power. While the representation of key assassins in his cartel are less developed, the show does offer compelling imagery of brave and authoritative Colombian politicians and police officials that are not afraid to stand up to narco-terrorism or American imperialism. Indeed, breaking crime genre convictions, *Narcos* leaves the viewer with conflicting ideas of who their support should lie with. The American DEA Agents protagonists are themselves proven to be capable of committing illegal and sometimes heinous acts to achieve their own goals of taking down Escobar once and for all.

All things considered, *Narcos* offers a fascinating look at the intersection of changing genre conventions and industrial practices. Gitlin (1979) argues:

> Shifts in genre presuppose the changing mentality of critical masses of writers and cultural producers; yet these changes would not take root commercially without corresponding changes in the dispositions (even the self-consciousness) of large audiences. In other words, changes in cultural

> ideals and in audience sensibilities must be harmonized to make for shifts in genre or formula (524).

Essentially, a hegemonic negotiation must occur for audiences to accept shifts in genre and greater meaning. *Narcos* is the product of Netflix's growing global sensibilities. The mentality of Netflix, a cultural producer, as previously established is set on dominating a world market (Murgia 2016; Ramachandran 2016). Audiences, likewise, are increasingly changing their viewing habits to rely on digital content, such as that provided by Netflix. By accepting and even demanding these changes in industrial practices, viewers are complying with or even expecting programming that is evolved from what broadcast and cable networks offer. Part of that evolution may be new crime genre conventions, like those offered by *Narcos*, where viewers are not clearly instructed as to who their sympathies should lay with. Situating itself in a Colombian world, U.S. viewers may further be caught off guard by the Colombian government characters' resistance and rebuking of American imperialism.

The setbacks of these genre innovations are the commercial motives behind the nuancing of the Latino Threat Narrative. The utilization of an international cast and crew is most likely meant to reach and excite a global audience. The continued use of Hollywood veterans in showrunner and other executive producer positions further limits the potential for truly renegade storytelling that might allow the Latino Threat Narrative to be told from a completely new or critical view, however. Imagine, for example, the different story that may have been told if *Narcos* was presented from the view of Colombian Police Chief Carrillo instead of the Anglo protagonist, DEA Agent Steve Murphy.

Likewise, *Jane the Virgin* has rebuked the Latino Threat Narrative by letting Jane exist as a woman who is more than just her sexuality. She's an independent Latina defined by her education goals, career aspirations, love for her matriarchal family and her sexuality. Unlike past representations of Latinas that tend to focus on deviant sexuality, Jane's healthy sexual attitude is refreshing and realistic. Although the accidental artificial insemination at the center of the show drives the plot of the program, the show ultimately focuses on the relationships Jane has with her mother and grandmother, Michael and Rafael. Her unexpected pregnancy simply acts as a catalyst for these relationships to grow and evolve. Further, far removed from Ramírez Berg's "harlot" or Jennifer Lopez's character in *Blood and Wine* as described by Molina Guzman and Valdivia, Jane's sexuality is never animalistic or driven by inherent nymphomania (71).

Significantly, when *Jane the Virgin* debuted in the fall of 2014, it became the first hour-long series since ABC's *Ugly Betty* (2006-2010) to feature a Latina headliner. Additionally, it was The CW's first foray into Latina/o programming. Intriguingly, CW President Mark Pedowitz worked with producer Ben Silverman on *Ugly Betty* when he was at ABC. Hoping to turn around the diminishing ratings caused by The CW's aging catalogue, such as reality show *America's Next Top Model* (2003-2015; 2016) and soapy *Gossip Girl* (2007-2012), Pedowitz reached out to Silverman to essentially find the next *Betty*. When Silverman recommended adapting *Jane* from Venezuelan *Juana la Virgen*, Pedowitz reportedly jumped on the title for its "potential to appeal across cultures and ages groups" (Steele 2015). As previously discussed, after originally finding the story too farfetched, Jennie Urman developed the program as showrunner.

Consequently, in the development of *Jane*, as described in the press, we see a number of Anglo decision makers contemplating and ultimately bringing the series to television. I do not mean to take away from all that *Jane* has accomplished; I only mean to point out the continued pattern of the fate of Latina/o stories being held in the hands of white executives. What is transcendent about the success of *Jane the Virgin* is the charisma of star Gina Rodriguez. Rodriguez's voice has roared since she was cast. As established, she brings continued attention to a need for diversity in the television industry. Rodriguez has worked with the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, National Council of La Raza, and Votolatino. In addition, her company I Can and I Will Productions was found with the intention of promoting diverse cultures on screen (Wagmeister 2017). Her role on *Jane* and increased fame has also given her a platform to begin The We Will Foundation, which aims to provide funding to empower young women through the arts (Fratangelo 2016).

The intention of this thesis has been explore the Latino Threat Narrative in post-network television. I have considered how new production practices have given Latina/os greater power in the creative process, even if the highest positions remain held by Hollywood insiders. Further, I have hoped to bring attention to the significance of voice, or lack thereof. Couldry argues, "Voice is the process of articulating the world from a distinctive embodied position. Failing to respect the inherent differences between voices means, once again, failing to recognize voice at all" (8). He goes on to bring attention to how "Voice…involves, from the start, both speaking *and listening*, that is, an act of attention that registers the uniqueness of the other's narratives" (9). As audiences of the media, we have seen the industry fail to recognize Latina/o voices throughout history.

Latina/os have been relegated to minor or supporting roles, forced to play stereotypical criminals and sexual deviants, or simply not included in Hollywood stories at all. As future scholars continue to examine Latina/o representation in television's post-network era and beyond, it will be interesting to see how the presence of Latina/o voices continues to grow or diminish. We have already seen how globally minded digital distributor Netflix and broadcast network The CW have given Latina/o voices greater value. The question is whether the rest of Hollywood is listening.

Appendix 1: Television Episode Index

Jane the Virgin

"Chapter One." *Jane the Virgin*: Season 1. Writ. Jennie Snyder Urman. Dir. Brad Silberling. CBS Television Studios, 2014.

"Chapter Two." *Jane the Virgin*: Season 1. Writ. Jennie Snyder Urman. Dir. Uta Briesewitz. CBS Television Studios, 2014.

"Chapter Three." *Jane the Virgin*: Season 1. Writ. Meredith Averill. Dir. Brad Silberling. CBS Television Studios, 2014.

"Chapter Eight." *Jane the Virgin*: Season 1. Writ. Josh Reims and Carolina Rivera. Dir. Norman Buckley. CBS Television Studios, 2014.

"Chapter Ten." *Jane the Virgin*: Season 1. Writ. Meredith Averill & Christopher Oscar Peña. Dir. Elodie Keene. CBS Television Studios, 2015.

Narcos Season 1 in Episodic Order

"Descenso." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Chris Brancato, Carlo Bernard & Doug Miro. Dir. José Padilha. Netflix, 2015.

"The Sword of Simón Bolivar." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Chris Brancato. Dir. José Padilha. Netflix, 2015.

"The Men of Always." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Dana Calvo. Dir. Guillermo Navarro. Netflix, 2015.

"The Palace in Flames." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Chris Brancato. Dir. Guillermo Navarro. Netflix, 2015.

"There Will Be a Future." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Dana Ledoux Miller. Dir. Andi Baiz. Netflix, 2015.

"Explosivos." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Andy Black. Dir. Andi Baiz. Netflix, 2015.

"You Will Cry Tears of Blood." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Zach Calig. Dir. Fernando Coimbra. Netflix, 2015.

"La Gran Mentira." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Allison Abner. Dir. Fernando Coimbra. Netflix, 2015.

"La Catedral." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Nick Schenk & Chris Brancato. Dir. Andi Baiz. Netflix, 2015.

"Despegue." *Narcos*: Season 1. Writ. Nick Schenk & Chris Brancato. Dir. Andi Baiz. Netflix, 2015.

Works Cited

Admin. "Gina Rodriguez 'Rising Star,' Birthday Girl, Advocate of Latino Roles." *LatinHeat*. 30 July 2014. Web. 8 December 2016.

Andreeva, Nellie. "'Narcos' Showrunner Adam Fierro Departs." *Deadline*. 23 December 2015. Web. 2 March 2017.

Andreeva, Nellie. "Showrunner Jennie Synder Urman on Almost Passing on 'Jane the Virgin', Pace, Title Change & How Will it End. *Deadline*. 22 May 2015. Web. 8 December 2016.

Aparicio, Frances. "Jennifer as Selena: Rethinking Latinidad through Pop Culture and Media." *Latino Studies* 1 (2003): 90-105.

Ashbrook, Tom. "Netflix's 'Narcos': The Drug Trade Then and Now." *On Point with Tom Ashbrook*. *NPR*. 2 September 2015. Web. 25 April 2015.

Báez, Jillian. "Latina/o Audiences as Citizens: Bridging Culture, Media, and Politics." *Contemporary Latina/o Media: Production, Circulation, Politics*, edited by Arlene Dávila & Yeidy Rivero. New York: New York University Press, 2014.

Bell, Amanda. "Gina Rodriguez Brought us to Tears with her Golden Globes Win." *MTV News*. 11 January 2015. Web. 6 December 2016.

Beltrán, Mary. "Late Invites to the Party: What's still not working for Latina/os and TV." *Flow Journal* 21.03 (2015).

Beltrán, Mary. *Latina/o Stars in U.S. Eyes: The Making and Meanings of Film and TV Stardom*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Beltrán, Mary. "Latina/os on TV! A Proud (and Ongoing) Struggle Over Representation and Authorship." *The Routledge Companion to Latina/o Popular Culture*, edited by Frederick Luis Aldama. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Berkshire, Geoff. "Press Tour: 'Jane the Virgin' breakout Gina Rodriguez 'waited patiently' for the right role." *Hitfix*. 18 July 2014. Web. 8 December 2016.

Buxton, Ryan. "Gina Rodriguez's Wonderful Wisdom on Body Image." *The Huffington Post*. 21 April 2015. Web. 9 December 2016.

Cabin, Chris. "'Narcos' Review: Netflix's Rollicking Look at the Hunt for Pablo Escobar." *Collider*. 27 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2015.

Caldwell, John. "Cultural Studies of Media Production: Critical Industrial Practices." Questions of Method in Cultural Studies, edited by Mimi White and James Schwoch. Hoboken: Wiley, 2006, pp. 109-153.

Caldwell, John. *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Calvario, Liz. "'Jane the Virgin' Tackles Immigration Laws on Latest Episode." *Variety Latino*. 20 January 2015. Web. 17 January 2017.

Campion, Chris. "I shot Pablo Escobar: Narcos' José Padilha on his new TV Series." *The Guardian*. 24 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2016.

Chavez, Leo. *The Latino Threat: Constructing Immigrants, Citizens, and The Nation*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013.

Cohen, Steven. "What 'Narcos' Still Gets Wrong About the War on Drugs." *New Republic*. 9 September 2016. Web. 2 March 2017.

Couldry, Nick. *The Place of Media Power: Pilgrims and Witnesses of the Media Age*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Couldry, Nick. *Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics after Neoliberalism*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2010.

D'Acci, Julie. "Cultural Studies, Television Studies, and the Crisis in the Humanities." *Television after TV: Essays on a Medium in Transition*, edited by Lynn Spigel and Jan Olsson. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004, pp. 419-445.

D'Acci, Julie. *Defining Women: Television and the Case of Cagney & Lacey*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994.

De la Fuente, Anna Marie. "Netflix steps up production on Spanish-Language Original Series." *Variety*. 3 April 2015. Web. 4 May 2016.

de Moraes, Lisa. "TCA: CW's 'Jane The Virgin' EP Ben Silverman Hopes Show Name Bunches Undies of Conservative Groups." *Deadline*. 18 July 2014. Web. 8 December 2016.

del Río, Esteban. "Authenticity, Appropriation, Articulation: The Cultural Logic of Latinidad." *The Routledge Companion to Latina/o Media*, edited by Maria Elena Cepeda. New York: Routledge, 2016, pp. 9-21.

Downing, John and Charles Husband. *Representing 'Race': Racisms, Ethnicities and Media*. London: Sage, 2005.

Egner, Jeremy. “Netflix Looks to ‘Narcos’ for a New Audience.” *The New York Times*. 26 August 2015. Web. 13 May 2016.

Ellcessor, Elizabeth. “Tweeting @feliciaday: Online Social Media, Convergence and Subcultural Stardom. *Cinema Journal* 51.2 (2012): 46-66.

Flores, William & Rina Benmayor eds. *Latino Cultural Citizenship: Claiming Identity, Space, and Rights*. Boston: Beacon, 1997.

Frantangelo, Nichole. “Gina Rodriguez Starts Foundation to Empower Young Women in the Arts.” *Latina*. 26 February 2016. Web. 7 March 2017.

Fuhrman, Elina. “Gina the Vivacious.” *Modern Luxury Miami*. 5 January 2015. Web. 6 December 2016.

Gilbert, Matthew. “Netlix’s electrifying ‘Narcos’ and the War on Drugs.” *The Boston Globe*. 27 August 2015. Web. 14 May 2016.

Gitlin, Todd. *Inside Prime Time*. Berkley: University of California Press, 2000.

Gitlin, Todd. “Prime Time Ideology: The Hegemonic Process in Television Entertainment.” *Social Problems* 26.3 (1979): 251-166.

Goldstein, Jessica. “‘Jane the Virgin’ Defies Stereotypes, Tackles Immigration Reform.” *ThinkProgress*. 21 January 2015. Web. 17 January 2017.

Goodman, Tim. “Narcos: TV Review.” *The Hollywood Reporter*. 19 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2016.

Gray, Herman. *Watching Race: Television and the Struggle for Blackness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Greenwald, Andy. “Stepped-on Scorsese: It may not be Pure Product, but ‘Narcos’ will get you High.” *Grantland*. 31 August 2015. Web. 14 May 2016.

Hall, Stuart. “The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media.” *Gender, Race, and Class in Media*, edited by Gail Dines & Jean M. Humez. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003. 89-93.

Hernandez, Lee. “Why Gina Rodriguez is the ‘Golden Globes’ Biggest Winner.” *The Huffington Post*. 12 January 2015. Web. 6 December 2016.

Hibberd, James. “Game of Thrones actor on new show: ‘We don’t need dragons. We got cocaine!’” *Entertainment Weekly*. 28 July 2015. Web. 14 May 2016.

Hill, Libby. “The Many Faces of Single Motherhood on Jane the Virgin.” *Vulture*. 10 May 2015. Web. 6 December 2016.

Hill, Libby. “The Unconventional Love Story at the Center of Jane the Virgin.” *A.V. Club*. 12 February 2015. Web. 6 December 2016.

Hogan, Brianne. “Narcos: ‘I can’t help it, I like this guy.’” *Creative Screenwriting*. 8 October 2015. Web. 4 May 2016.

Hopewell, John. “Netflix launches in Spain with ‘Narcos,’ ‘Cuervos.’” *Variety*. 20 October 2015. Web. 4 May 2016.

Hyland, Steven. “The Shifting Terrain of Latin American Drug Trafficking.” *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective* 4.12 (2011).

Jaramillo, Juliana Jiménez. “Netflix’s Narcos Might Be Our First TV Show to Accurately Represent the Latin America Drug War.” *Slate*. 16 July 2015. Web. 14 May 2016.

Kang, Inkoo. “Netflix’s ‘Narcos’ Tries to the be ‘The Wire’ for Colombia’s Drug War.” *The Village Voice*. 26 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2016.

Kelley, Seth. “‘Jane the Virgin’ Finale: Jennie Urman on the Big Arrival and Writing Smart Women.” *Variety*. 11 May 2015. Web. 6 November 2016.

Lichter, S. Robert and Daniel Amundson. “Distorted Reality: Hispanic Characters in TV Entertainment.” *Latin Looks: Images of Latinas and Latinos in the U.S. Media*, edited by Clara E. Rodríguez. Boulder: Westview Press, 1997. 57-72.

Liebman, Lisa. “Narcos’s Wagner Moura on Playing Pablo Escobar and Why He Learned Spanish Before He Got the Part.” *Vulture*. 11 September 2015. 14 May 2016.

Lowry, Brian. “TV Review: Narcos.” *Variety*. 18 August 2015. Web. 14 May 2016.

Lotz, Amanda. *The Television Will Be Revolutionized*. New York: New York University Press, 2014.

Lyons, Margaret. “Netflix’s Narcos is Addictive, Smart Entertainment.” *Vulture*. 28 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2016.

Marez, Curtis. *Drug Wars: The Political Economy of Narcotics*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2004.

Martinez, Diana. “Netflix’s Narcos is Harrowing, Surreal, and Exactly the Portrayal of the Drug War We Needed.” *Slate*. 27 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2016.

McNamara, Mary. “Review: Netflix’s ‘Narcos’ plays up Pablo Escobar’s menace and magnetism.” *The Los Angeles Times*. 27 August 2015. Web. 13 May 2016.

Molina Guzmán, Isabel and Angharad Valdivia. “Brain, Brow or Bootie: Latina Iconicity in Contemporary Popular Culture.” *Communication Review*, 7.2 (2004): 203-219.

Moreno, Carolina and Roque Planas. “‘Jane the Virgin’ Pauses Mid-Episode to Drive Home the Need for Immigration Reform.” *The Huffington Post*. 22 January 2015. Web. 17 January 2017.

Murgia, Madhumita. “Inside Netflix: How Reed Hastings is building the first global TV network.” *The Telegraph*. 26 March 2016. Web. 4 May 2016.

Negrón-Mutaner, Frances. “The Gang’s Not all Here: The State of Latinos in Comtemporary US Media.” *Contemporary Latina/o Media: Production, Circulation, Politics*, edited by Arlene Dávila and Yeidy Rivero. New York: New York University Press, 2014, pp. 103-124.

Negrón-Mutaner, Frances with Chelsea Abbas, Luis Figueroa, and Samuel Robson. *The Latina/o Media Gap: A Report on the State of Latinos in the U.S. Media*. New York: The Center for Race and Ethnicity, Columbia University, 2014.

Newcomb, Horace & Pual Hirsch. “Television as a Cultural Forum.” *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* Summer 1983: 561-573.

Noriega, Chon. *Shot in America: Television, the State, and the Rise of Chicano Cinema.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Nunez, Alanna. “Gina Rodriguez want to Change the TV Industry for Latinos.” *Cosmopolitan*. 6 January 2015. Web. 6 December 2016.

Obaro, Tomi. “Gina Rodriguez is Conquering Television in Jane the Virgin.” *Chicago Magazine*. 16 December 2014. Web. 8 December 2016.

O’Connell, Michael. “‘Jane the Virgin’ Showrunner Wants ‘Ugly Betty’ Meets ‘Gilmore Girls.’” *The Hollywood Reporter*. 18 July 2014. Web. 9 November 2016.

Opam, Kwame. “Review: Narcos is the next great Netflix show.” *The Verge*. 26 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2016.

Orley, Emily. “‘Jane the Virgin’ Made a Statement about Immigration Reform in its MLK Day Episode.” *Buzzfeed*. 20 January 2015. Web. 17 January 2017.

Pacheco, Brian. “Latinos in the Writers Room: Q&A with Emmylou Diaz of CW’s ‘Jane the Virgin.’” *National Hispanic Media Coalition*. 13 October 2014. 8 December 2016.

Petersen, Anne Helen. "'We're Making Our Own Paparazzi': Twitter and the Construction of Star Authenticity." *Flow Journal* 9.14 (2009).

Ramírez-Berg, Charles. *Latino Images in Film: Stereotypes, Subversion, and Resistance*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.

Ramachandran, Shalini. "What's New on Netflix: A Big Push to Go Global." *The Wall Street Journal*. 30 September 2016. Web. 2 March 2017.

Recio, Gabriela. "Drugs and Alcohol: US Prohibition and the Origins of the Drug Trade in Mexico, 1910-1930." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34.1 (2002): 21-42.

Rodriguez, Matthew. "Gina Rodriguez's Emotional 'Variety' Speech Sets a Powerful New Standard for Hollywood." *Identities.Mic*. 27 February 2016. Web. 8 December 2016.

Rodriguez, Vittoria and Mary Beltrán. "From the Bronze Screen to the Computer Screen: Latina/o Web Series and Independent Production." *The Routledge Companion to Latina/o Media,* edited by Maria Elena Cepeda and Dolores Inés Casillas. New York: Roudtledge, 2015.

Rose, Lacey and Lesley Goldberg. "Jennifer Lopez Drama ordered Straight to Series at NBC." *The Hollywood Reporter*. 21 February 2014. Web. 6 March 2017.

Rose, Lacey and Marisa Guthrie. "The CW's Mark Pedowitz on Metrics, Genre and a 'Virgin.'" *The Hollywood Reporter*. 18 July 2014. Web. 9 November 2016.

Rothman, Michael and Lesley Messer. "2015 Golden Globes: Top 5 Moments From the Night." *ABC News*. 11 January 2015. Web. 6 December 2016.

Roush, Matt. "What's Worth Watching: Narcos on Netflix." *TV Insider*. 26 August 2015. Web. 25 April 2016.

Roxborough, Scott. "Fact-Checking Reed Hastings: Netflix's Big Challenge Overseas." *The Hollywood Reporter*. 13 January 2016. Web. 4 May 2016.

Ruiz, Jason. "Dark Matters: Vince Gilligan's Breaking Bad, Suburban Crime Dramas, and Latinidad in the Golden Age of Cable Television." *Aztlán* 40.1 (2015): 37-62.

Sage, Alyssa. "Narcos Director Jose Padilha: 'The True Story of Pablo Escobar is Too Hard to Believe.'" *Variety*. 12 May 2106. Web. 14 May 2016.

Santa Ana, Otto. *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.

Santa Ana, Otto. *Juan in a Hundred: The Representation of Latinos on Network News*. Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2013.

Saraiya, Sonia. "'Narcos' could be our next 'The Wire': Neflix's sweeping true story of Pablo Escobar's empire captivates." *Salon*. 4 September 2015. Web. 4 May 2016.

Sava, Oliver. "Adapting a Telenovela with Jane the Virgin showrunner Jennie Urman." *A.V. Club*. 8 December 2014. Web. 6 December 2016.

Shohat, Ella and Robert Stam. *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Smith, C. Molly. "Gina Rodriguez Tears up Backstage at the Golden Globes: 'The Win Meant Everything." *Entertainment Weekly*. 11 January 2016. Web. 6 December 2016.

Steel, Emily. "Virgin Conceives; Network Profits." *The New York Times*. 2 January 2015. Web. 7 March 2017.

Stratton, Jon. "Michael Mann's Miami Vice: Protecting White America in the 1980s." *Television & New Media* 10.2 (2009): 195-215.

Suarez Sang, Lucia. "Ex-DEA agents who fought Pablo Escobar headline new NatGeo documentary." *Fox News*. 30 August 2016. Web. 2 March 2017.

Telles, Edward and Vilma Ortiz. *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation, and Race.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008.

THR Staff. "'Jane the Virgin' Star Gina Rodriguez Calls the New CW Series 'A Reflection of Reality.'" *The Hollywood Reporter*. 22 August 2014. Web 8 November 2016.

Toby, Mekeisha Madden. "'Narcos' Review: Netflix's Pablo Escobar Drama is Sexy, Bloody and Addictive." *The Wrap*. 30 August 2015. Web. 4 May 2016.

Villareal, Yvonne. "Golden Globes 2015: 'Jane the Virgin's' Gina Rodriguez on her Nomination." *The Los Angeles Times*. 11 December 2014. Web. 8 December 2016.

Wagmeister, Elizabeth. "Gina Rodriguez signs overall deal with CBS Television Studios." *Variety*. 30 January 2017. Web. 7 March 2017.

Warner, Kara. "Jane the Virgin's Gina Rodriguez: The Latino Community needs to Unite." *Vulture*. 16 March 2015. Web 6 December 2016.

Wiselman, Jarett. "'Jane The Virgin' Star Hopes Other Latinos See Her Success and Say 'Why Not Me?'" Buzzfeed. 11 December 2014. Web. 8 December 2016.

Ibid. "This is the Most Profound – And Unexpected – Speech about Cultural Identity You'll Read Today." *Buzzfeed*. 18 July 2014. Web 6 December 2016.